

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

No. 107.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1901.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE PRETTY SHOP GIRL,

OR

THE GRAND STREET MYSTERY. BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.



From their concealment behind the shed, the two detectives watched the young girl. As she reached the corner, she was accosted by a well-dressed man, who raised his shining silk hat, at the same time grasping her by the wrist.

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The Bradys and the Pretty Shop Girl:

OR,

The Grand Street Mystery.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY.

"Jasper Woods, there is \$50,000 in this valise."

"I'm aware of it, Mr. Midley, I counted the money myself."

"You are to take it to the German Bank for deposit."

"Then I'd better hurry, as the bank closes in ten minutes."

"A cab is awaiting you at the door."

"Very well, sir. Give me the bank book," said the old and trusted cashier of the great department store on Grand street.

Mr. Midley, the senior member of the firm, handed Woods the book, and the cashier seized the black leather valise and started to leave the office.

Jasper Woods was an old-fashioned bachelor of forty, with long, gray hair and a shaggy gray beard, dark eyes and a large nose.

He had grown up from boyhood in the firm's employ, and was implicitly trusted.

As he left the office with the valuable valise in his hand, and passed the linen counter, his glance rested upon Violet Gray, the prettiest girl in the store.

An odd expression stole over the grim face of the crusty old bachelor, for she was the only girl who ever had aroused any feeling in his breast.

Violet Gray was a beautiful blonde of seventeen, with a handsome figure clad in a stylish costume, and there was

a merry smile on her face, and an arch look in her big, blue eyes as she nodded to the cashier, and said:

"Hello, Mr. Woods! Off to the bank, as usual."

"Yes, Miss Gray, and I only wish I had the pleasure of your company."

"Oh, go on with your nonsense!" laughed the young girl. "Any one to hear you would think you were in love with me!"

A merry peal of laughter escaped her red lips, and the old cashier flushed and cast a queer glance at her as he passed on and muttered:

"Perhaps I am. Who knows?"

Mr. Midley was coming on behind him, to see that he got safely into the cab, and Jasper Woods passed out into the street.

At the curb stood a public hack, drawn by a big black horse, and an old negro named Washington Jones sat on the seat, arrayed in an old blue army coat with brass buttons, and a rusty plug hat with a hole in the crown.

The sidewalk was crowded with people, who were walking up and down the street, and numerous vehicles of all kinds were passing to and fro.

Mr. Midley saw Jasper hurry to the cab, heard him tell the driver to speed his horse so as to reach the bank before it closed, and saw him enter the vehicle.

As the door slammed shut a horse-car came along on its way to the ferry, and to the cabman's disgust, prevented him for a moment turning his horse out.

"Fo' de lan' sakes," grumbled the old fellow, impatiently.

"De mo' hurry a man am in, de mo' ebery fing gwine ter hinder yo'!"

The car passed on in a moment, however, and Mr. Jones cracked his whip, his old nag plunged ahead, and in a moment more the carriage went tearing toward the Bowery at a furious rate of speed.

Mr. Midley returned to the interior of the store with a satisfied look on his face, and a feeling of relief in his mind that his money would reach the bank in time.

On dashed the cab, never pausing an instant until it reached the corner of Spring street and the Bowery, where it was pulled up before the bank.

Washington Jones leaped to the ground.

Opening the door of the cab, he peered in and cried:

"Orright, Massa Woods. Heah am de bank, an'—"

But here he paused.

The cab was empty.

Jasper Woods had vanished with his black leather valise.

The interior of the cab was spattered with what looked like blood, a big stained bowie knife lay on the seat cushion, and the cashier's hat was on the floor, crushed and broken.

A gasping cry escaped the old negro, and he rubbed his eyes and glared into the carriage half doubting the evidence of his senses.

"Gone!"

This exclamation finally burst from his thick lips, and then he added blankly:

"But whar am he gone?"

He had seen Jasper enter the cab at the store door, and knew he could scarcely have alighted when the horse went tearing along at such a terrific gait without falling and seriously injuring himself.

Moreover, he thought he would have heard the cashier getting out of the cab had he done so while they were on their way to the bank.

The sight of the dagger, hat and red stains gave rise to dark forebodings in Washington's mind, and he wondered what became of old Jasper.

He finally rushed into the bank, and seeing nothing of him there, he returned to the street and scanned every one in sight.

But he saw absolutely nothing of the cashier.

It was very mysterious.

What had become of Jasper Woods?

As the old coon thought of the man and money vanishing so suddenly, and observed again the singular condition of the interior of his vehicle, he groaned:

"By golly, dar's been murder yah! But who done it?"

Finding he could not solve the strange problem, Washington finally concluded to hasten back to Midley & Co.'s and notify them of the fact.

He therefore drove back to the store.

When Midley & Co. heard the news they were horrified.

An examination of the interior of the carriage convinced them that some rascal had been concealed inside the cab, and to rob the old cashier had attacked him with the knife.

Holding the cab there, Mr. Midley called up Secret Ser-

vice headquarters, and asked to have a detective sent around at once.

In reply to this summons a pair of detectives known as the Bradys made their appearance, and asked for the details.

One of the detectives was an old man with white hair, and the other was a youth of twenty, with a handsome face and powerful figure.

Old King Brady, the eldest, was tall and powerful; an old blue frock coat tightly buttoned up to his standing collar and black stock enveloped his body, and he wore upon his head a huge white felt hat.

There was something rather eccentric about the man, and his clean-shaven face showed a determined yet cautious disposition.

Young King Brady, his partner and pupil, affected a style of dress similar to that of the old detective, and the boy was equally as brave, astute and keen as his companion in every respect.

Harry was not related to Old King Brady, but had once evinced a desire to become a detective, and put himself under the care of the celebrated old officer.

The boy was such an ambitious pupil that in due time he threatened to eclipse his remarkable tutor in the detective work they carried on.

Working together, they became a terror to the crooks.

An absolute affection sprang up between the pair.

Either one would, if necessary, sacrifice his life for the other.

The wonderful work they performed made them the most famous officers on the force, and greatly endeared them to their chief.

Upon reaching the department store, and meeting Mr. Midley, they learned the details of the mysterious disappearance of Jasper Woods and the \$50,000 he had in the valise.

The story brought a slight smile to Old King Brady's face, and he asked Mr. Midley in a quiet, careless way:

"Have you any idea what became of the man?"

"None whatever," replied the shop-keeper, shaking his head.

"Don't you suspect it was a put-up job by Woods to rob you?"

"No, indeed!" indignantly replied Mr. Midley. "That idea is preposterous, Jasper Woods has been in our employ for twenty-five years, and most of that time held positions of trust. He could have robbed us years ago of a much larger sum, had he been inclined to do so. But we have never known him to commit a dishonest act. We therefore cannot believe he has abused our confidence at this late day."

"Perhaps he never till now needed a large sum of money."

"I cannot entertain such a suspicion against him, Mr. Brady."

"Where does he live?"

"In a furnished room at 201½ East Seventeenth street."

"Has he any relatives?"

"None whatever."

"How about his habits?"

"They were above reproach. He was a great home body, and spent most of his evenings at his room, after business hours, and saved his money."

"Mr. Midley, he and the cab-driver may be in league."

"That idea is simply absurd."

"We shall see. Give me an accurate description of Woods."

"Here's a tin-type picture of him, which he had on his desk," said the old merchant, handing over a cheap photograph, and then he minutely described Woods' mannerisms, attire and general deportment.

When he finished, Old King Brady asked him for a description of the money, the valise it was in, and the hour of the cashier's departure.

Meantime, Harry had been writing notes of what was said in a small memorandum book he carried.

Having gained all the particulars he could get, Old King Brady took a chew of plug tobacco, and after a moment's reflection, he said:

"Now let us examine the cab and question the driver."

"Very well," assented Mr. Midley, "and I think that when you have done so, you will find that Jasper Woods has met with foul play."

"Indeed! Why do you say that?"

"Because the interior of that cab looks as if an assassin had been hiding inside of it, waiting for Woods to enter with the money. The interior of the vehicle has every appearance of having been the scene of a murder," said Mr. Midley, impressively.

The Bradys bent a keen glance upon him, and silently followed him out to the street where the carriage stood.

CHAPTER II.

SIFTING THE EVIDENCE.

Washington Jones, whip in hand, stood beside the cab door, a glum look upon his dusky face, and his old plug hat jammed on the back of his head.

He rolled his eyes upon the two detectives inquiringly, and when Old King Brady told him they were officers, he looked scared, and gasped:

"Fo' de Lawd, gemmon, am yo' gwine ter 'rest me?"

"Don't know yet," replied Young King Brady, stepping forward, a hard, metallic look in his eyes. "Stand aside, please."

As the old darky complied, Harry pulled open the cab door.

The next moment he and his partner were deftly and carefully examining the interior of the vehicle.

Picking up the big bowie knife, Harry observed that it was not new. It had a buck-horn handle, and a curved steel blade eight inches long.

The boy passed it over to Old King Brady, a smile on his face, and said:

"It's a fake!"

"How?" asked the old detective.

"It conveys the impression that it was used on Woods, doesn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, it wasn't."

"How can you tell?"

"The blade isn't blood stained, only the handle is stained."

"By Jove, you are right, Harry! This blade didn't pierce Woods' body."

"It was simply left behind as a blind."

"Perhaps. I'll keep it."

The old detective put it in his pocket.

Harry searched the vehicle in every nook and corner.

The cashier's crushed and broken derby hat next arrested his attention.

Spending some time looking at it, Harry finally said:

"This hat seems to indicate that it was knocked from the cashier's head during a struggle with an assailant, don't it?"

"Yes, that's what one would infer from its appearance."

"Well, it wasn't."

"What have you discovered now?"

"If you will examine it very closely, you will see that it was lifted from the bearer's head, laid upon the floor, and violently stamped with the heel of the right foot. Every hole in it was cut with the heel of a shoe. The holes are all the same size and shape, and the felt bears the imprint of the nails in the heel."

Old King Brady was amazed.

He observed that Harry's deduction was correct.

The boy's keen discernment and good logic startled him.

Up to that moment he had not detected the two important facts which Harry had observed as soon as he saw the knife and the battered hat.

Retaining possession of the hat, he exclaimed:

"I quite agree with your theory, Harry. Is there anything else there?"

"Only this little cork," replied the boy, holding it up.

"Where was it?"

"On the floor."

"Stained with blood, too, ain't it?"

"No. Carmine ink. It's evidently the cork from a bottle of carmine ink. The stains on it are damp yet, which plainly shows that it recently was pulled from a full bottle. The color is exactly the same color as the so-called blood stains spattering the interior cushions and upholstery of this cab. In fact, it's the same color as the stains on the hat and on the dagger handle."

"Then you think——"

"I am positive that Woods spattered the ink about in a great hurry to leave the impression that it was human gore produced by somebody stabbing him with the knife," interrupted the young detective dryly.

"Can you find anything else?"

"No," replied Harry, shaking his head.

"Then let us see how the cashier managed to get into the cab, arrange his evidence of foul play, and get away with

the valise full of money without letting anybody see him escaping."

The old detective turned his attention to Washington Jones.

Surveying the old fellow from head to foot a moment, he saw that he was only a simple, innocent old darky, who was scarcely capable of engaging in a desperate scheme of robbery.

His keen scrutiny made the negro quite uneasy.

He fidgeted about, stiffened up, and without budging or moving his head, kept watching the detectives furtively out of the corners of his eyes.

Finally Old King Brady said to him in sharp, stern tones:

"Jones!"

"Yassah!"

"Are you ringin' in with Woods?"

"Golly, yo' spec' I'se a crook, sah?"

"No tellin'; if you are, the Lord help you!"

"I ain't got nuffin' ter do wid de job."

"We hope not. See here, how often have you driven Woods to the bank?"

"Free times a week fo' de las' twenty-five years, boss."

"Ah, you're an old-timer, too, are you?"

"Yassah. I'se allus had dat job, boss."

"Now, answer my questions, and tell the truth, too, mind you!"

"Dis chile nebber tell no lies, sah."

"Well, then, when Mr. Woods entered your cab, what happened?"

"He done slam de do' shet, an' soon's de car pass, I pull de ole nag out in de tracks, whip up, an' drike like fury ter de Bowery."

"When the car passed? What do you mean by that?"

"De cab stan' jes' whar it am now—"

"Yes."

"As yo' kin see, de space 'tween de gutter an' de track am berry narrer. When Massa Woods he wuz in de ker-ridge, a car was passin' on de way toward de ferry. I wait a minute till it go by."

"Ah, the cab was jammed between the curb and the car a few moments after Woods entered the vehicle, eh?"

"Dat's about de size ob it, boss."

"Are you quite positive Woods didn't pass out of the cab door on the side nearest to the car with the valise, and board the car, thus escaping?"

"I didn't see nuffin' ob de kine, sah."

"But it could have been done, couldn't it?"

"Dunno as dar was room ter open de do' 'tween de cab an' de car."

"Let us see."

The old detective passed around the vehicle and opened the door.

As a car was coming along, he waited and watched.

The door was swinging wide open, and when the car passed, its side just grazed the edge of the door without touching.

Old King Brady was satisfied on this point.

Closing the door he returned to the sidewalk.

Turning to Harry, he said:

"He could have passed through the cab and boarded the car without attracting attention. In fact, if Jones did not see him his movements would have been screened from the view of everyone else by the cab and open door."

"You seem to be sure that he escaped that way," said the boy.

"I am. It's a reasonable supposition. View the facts: From the moment the cab got started, it went at such a furious pace it would have been next to impossible for Woods to have alighted without injuring himself."

"Unless the cab paused on the way to the bank."

"Of course; but for the present we've got to accept the driver's assertion that he didn't. All this occurred at ten minutes to three."

"By consulting the starter of the railroad depot, we can find out what car passed here at that time, and question the conductor."

"That's a good proposition."

"I'm going to quiz Mr. Midley a little further."

"Go ahead."

The store-keeper was standing near by with a troubled look on his face, and Young King Brady approached him and asked:

"Do you know, Mr. Midley, whether Jasper Woods had any attachment—any love affair of particular interest?"

"He was a crusty old bachelor, Mr. Brady."

"Yes, I know; but I thought some lady might have attracted him—I mean some lady for whose sake he might come back. If he had a girl, we could watch her. The missing man would be pretty sure to get in communication with his girl, you know. By keeping her shadowed, it might be the means of leading to our finding him."

"I see," said Mr. Midley, gravely, "but I'm sure I don't know anything about his love affairs, if indeed he had any. But, stay, now I come to think of it, I to-day witnessed an odd circumstance."

"What was it?"

"When Woods was passing through the store to-day, on his way out to the carriage with the valise of money, I was close behind him, following him out, to see him safely off in the cab, as was always my custom. As he passed the linen counter, Violet Gray, one of our prettiest salesladies, hailed him, and said: 'Off to the bank, as usual?' He answered: 'Yes, Miss Gray, and I only wish I had the pleasure of your company.' 'Oh, go on with your nonsense!' she laughed, 'any one to hear you would think you were in love with me!' He flushed and answered: 'Perhaps I am. Who knows?' and then he went on."

The Bradys glanced significantly at each other.

Telling Jones to wait for them, Harry said to Mr. Midley:

"You had better point out Violet Gray to us, sir."

"Very well. Come into the store."

They followed him in, and when they reached the linen

counter, the proprietor pointed at the pretty shop-girl, and said:

"There she is, Mr. Brady."

CHAPTER III.

TRACING THE MISSING MAN.

Violet Gray had just finished selling ten yards of fine Irish linen to a fussy old German woman, and was replacing the bolt on a shelf, when the two detectives approached the counter.

She glanced at them in a business-like way, and asked briskly:

"Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

"We wish to have a few minutes' talk with you," said Harry smilingly.

She glanced at him suspiciously a moment, fearing he was a masher, for her pretty face often attracted young fellows of that stamp to her counter.

A look of displeasure and annoyance crossed her face, and she said coldly:

"If it's on business, go ahead."

"It is on a very important subject, Miss Gray."

"Ah, you know my name!" she exclaimed, with a look of surprise.

"Yes, Mr. Midley just told us. We're here in his interest."

"Oh," said Violet, a smile chasing the frown from her white brow. "I see."

"We are detectives, and our name is Brady."

"New store detectives?"

"No, indeed, United States officers."

"Has anything happened here?"

"Yes, Jasper Woods has disappeared with the money he was taking to the bank."

A look of wild astonishment overspread the young girl's face. She gave a gasp, and staring at Harry with distended eyes, she exclaimed:

"My goodness, is that so?"

"Yes. He got away with fifty thousand dollars."

"What! Stole the money?"

"So we think."

"I can hardly believe it."

"Was that man in love with you, Miss Gray?"

A startled expression flashed over her features when Harry asked this abrupt question, and she reflected a moment, and said hesitatingly:

"I really do not know."

"You don't know? Well, you certainly ought to!"

"Why do you ask me such a question?"

"Because it is absolutely necessary for us to know whether he is or not."

"I scarcely know how to answer you, Mr. Brady."

"Why?" demanded Harry, quickly.

"Because sometimes I've thought he was, and other times I thought he wasn't."

"Why did you believe he was?"

"I'll tell you," replied the girl, thoughtfully, "I've worked in this store for a year now, and with my salary I help to pay the expenses of the little flat in which I live with my mother, who also earns money by giving music lessons. We live in No. — West Twenty-sixth street. Almost from the day I began here, Mr. Woods has shown a deep interest in me."

"In what way?"

"Well, he never lost a chance to speak to me, although he never touched on the subject of love. Sometimes he would insist upon seeing me home, and he was a frequent caller at our flat until—until—"

"Until what?"

"Till he found that a young stock broker named Ralph Morgan was interested, and often called on me. As soon as Mr. Woods discovered this, he suddenly ceased his visits, and acted so oddly I came to the conclusion that he was jealous of Mr. Morgan."

"I see," said Harry, smiling and nodding, "and now?"

"Well," replied Violet, "Mr. Woods always treated me as politely as ever since then, and sought my society as much as possible in the store; but he never referred to the reason he stopped his friendly calls."

"What made you believe he was in love with you?"

"I don't know. A woman generally can tell if a man cares for her, even if the man doesn't declare his passion, you know," laughed the girl, "and I suppose it was this intuition that made me believe Mr. Woods was after me, although he never declared his intention. But when his calls ceased, I began to think that after all he wasn't in love with me."

"What gave you that changed opinion?"

"It seemed to me that if a man loved a woman, he would not let a rival scare him away so easily," she replied. "My impression of true love is that a man would fight to retain the lady of his choice."

Harry laughed heartily at her way of reasoning.

"Well," he said presently, "he was certainly a faint-hearted lover, if he was after you. I am obliged for your information. Good-day."

And tipping their hats, they left her.

They held a short consultation together, and joined Mr. Midley in his private office, and Old King Brady said to him:

"We are going to follow up this case, sir, and see if we can't find Mr. Woods. It is our firm belief that he was not attacked and robbed. We are convinced, on the contrary, that he has simply put up a very clumsy job on you to delude the police, and robbed you of that money. All his evidence was purposely and hurriedly manufactured on the spur of the moment."

"I'd hate to know your theory is correct," said the merchant, "but if it is, I hope you will run down the man and recover our money."

"We intend to do so. Leave the matter in our hands

As soon as we gain any tangible information we shall notify you. In the meantime, keep quiet about the matter."

Soon afterward they left him.

Going out, they entered Washington Jones' cab, and Harry said to him:

"Take us to the car stables at the foot of Grand street."

"Yassah," replied the old darky, and he drove away.

Within a short time the detectives reached their destination, and going into the stable, they met the starter.

Having explained what they wanted to know, he readily consulted his time-tables, and by computing he finally learned which car it was that passed the store of Midley & Co. at ten minutes to three.

"That car will be back here in a quarter of an hour," he told the officers. "If you will wait, you can see the conductor and get more information."

"We shall do so," answered Old King Brady.

Armed with the number of the car, and the name of the conductor, they went outside and took up a position where they could watch for the one they wanted.

Promptly in fifteen minutes the car appeared.

They boarded it when it paused at the end of the line, and Harry asked the conductor:

"Do you recollect seeing a man boarding this car with a black leather valise in front of Midley & Co.'s on your last trip this way?"

"Sure an' I do," replied the conductor, promptly. "He shstepped from a cab ter ther car, an' he wor in that much av a hurry ter git insoide that he hit a man's legs wid his bag, an' had a quarrel wid him."

"That's the party, I think. Can you describe him?"

"Wid aise. He had long, gray hair, an' a beard av ther same color, a shabby brown suit, an' a big nose."

"Where did he get off?"

"On ther corner av Orchard street."

"Then he only rode one block?"

"No more."

"Did you notice which way he went?"

"I did, as his quarrel drew my attintion to him. He wint up Orchard street."

This was about all the information of any value the detectives could get, so they thanked the conductor and drove back to Orchard street.

Here they dismissed Washington Jones.

"See if we can trace him from this point," Harry suggested.

They then began to inquire of policemen, peddlers, and shop-keepers about a man of Woods' description, as they went up Orchard street.

But they gained no information until they reached Rivington street, and there a policeman told them he had seen a person of the cashier's description go up to the elevated railroad station at Allen street.

The Bradys ascended the stairs and questioned the ticket chopper, and he declared he had seen Woods board one of the uptown Second avenue trains.

The Bradys then made a desperate effort to find out where Woods alighted. In this they were disappointed, however,

for, although they found the train on which he rode uptown, none of the brakemen remembered having seen him.

"The trail is lost!" said Old King Brady in disgust, several hours later.

"Only for a while," was Harry's grim reply. "We have not wasted our time. The investigations we pursued have plainly shown us that Woods passed through the carriage, jumped on the passing car with the valise, alighted at Orchard street, went up to Rivington, walked over to Allen street, and boarded an uptown train on the Second avenue elevated road."

"It's going to be a difficult job to find him, I fear."

"No question about that. Our safest course now will be to try to prevent him from getting out of the city by any of the ferries, railroads or steamers. Come on to Secret Service headquarters, and we'll send out a description of him to all the police stations, so a lookout for him will be kept."

This was a good plan, and Old King Brady endorsed it. They soon reached headquarters.

Having explained the case to the Division Chief, they notified all the precinct stations of what they wanted.

The Bradys then went home.

Several days passed by without their having heard any news of Woods, and they scoured the city from end to end in search of him in vain.

It began to look as if the man had succeeded in escaping from New York, and the detectives felt somewhat discouraged.

At this juncture, however, a startling event occurred, which had an important bearing upon the case in hand.

A telephone message from Midley & Co. reached them at headquarters, asking them to call at the store at once.

Violet Gray, on her way to the shop, had been attacked by an assassin, who had made an attempt to kill her.

The Bradys hastened to obey the summons.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION.

When the Bradys reached the big dry goods store, and were ushered into the proprietor's private office, they found Violet in the room with him.

The girl's pretty face was clouded with an expression of deep anxiety, and she seemed to be very much agitated.

"Yon are prompt," said Mr. Midley, when he saw the officers. "I am glad you've come. This young lady has had some great trouble."

"Kindly explain what happened," Old King Brady said to her.

"It's a singular affair," replied Violet, in troubled tones. "I was on my way here to business at half past seven. When I reached the corner of Grand and Eldridge streets, a cab came dashing along rapidly. I glanced at it. The window was open, but the shade was drawn down. Just as I looked at it, a hand was thrust out the window, clutching a revolver. I saw a portion of a man's face under the

shade. The pistol was aimed at me and discharged. The bullet grazed my head, and I shrieked and fell to the sidewalk. A crowd rushed up and surrounded me. When I revived I found an ambulance surgeon working over me. He said the wound was slight. See—here it is."

She turned the side of her head toward the detectives. They saw it was cut, and covered with court plaster.

Startled by what she said, Old King Brady asked her: "Have you any enemies?"

"None that I know of," she replied.

"Then why was this attempt upon your life made?"

"I am puzzled to account for it."

"Strange that any one should wish to kill you."

"Very. It worries me greatly, too."

"Did you recognize the face in the carriage window?"

"No, indeed! All I could see was a pair of eyes and the hand."

"How mysterious! What became of the cab?"

"It went right on, and escaped before any one could stop it."

"Was it a public hack?"

"I don't think so. It looked like a private rig."

"Can you describe it, or the driver?"

"Not very well. The carriage looked like a new black coupe, with dark green wheels. The horse was a big bay, and the driver was a white man with a clean-shaved face, a high hat having a rosette at the side, and he wore dark blue livery trimmed with silver buttons."

"Nothing unusual in such an outfit."

"You could not find it by my description, I'm sure."

"It would almost be impossible to do so."

Old King Brady reflected a while, and then asked:

"Can't you think of any reason why any one should wish to kill you?"

"No, sir," replied Violet, "I haven't the faintest idea."

The detectives were perplexed.

They could form no theory about the case.

Finally Mr. Midley asked them:

"What's to be done about the matter, gentlemen? It's quite evident that somebody designs to murder this girl. Such an attempt would not be made without a motive. The question is, what was the motive?"

"If we knew that," answered the old detective, "we might not have any difficulty in tracing the criminal. I've got a suspicion, though."

"What can it be?"

"That the assassin was Woods."

"Jasper Woods! Good gracious, why do you think it was him?"

"Because he is the only person who might have a motive in trying to assassinate this young lady. It is to be presumed that he was in love with her. He found she favored another. Jealous, and determined that his rival should not get her, he probably made up his mind to kill her sooner than let his rival get her."

Violet looked startled.

This was a phase she never thought of before.

"Perhaps you are right!" she exclaimed.

"It's only a theory," said Old King Brady, "but as long as we have no other reasonable idea, this one may be correct."

"Have you decided what you are going to do about the matter?" asked Mr. Midley, after a pause.

"Oh, yes," replied the old detective, "but we don't care to mention our plans."

"What do you advise us to do?"

"Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Let the young lady attend to her business much as if nothing had happened, and we shall do the rest."

"But suppose I'm attacked again?" said Violet, in alarm.

"You won't be, for we intend to guard you in future."

"In what way?"

"By keeping you watched."

"Oh, that's a relief to my mind!"

"Should any one again attempt to injure you, they'll have to answer to us."

With this assurance, the Bradys left the office.

They lurked about the vicinity of the store all day, and at six o'clock, when Violet emerged, they followed her at a safe distance to avoid being seen by any one who might attack her.

The darkness of night had fallen, and lights glowed in the windows of the various stores lining the street.

Violet usually walked home.

She had made a purchase at the store that day, and it was contained in a bundle she carried in her hand.

Passing along the busy street, she crossed the Bowery and headed for Broadway, up which she usually walked.

Just as she reached the corner of Crosby street she paused.

Not wishing to be seen, the Bradys darted behind a storm shed against a big building.

"Is she going to turn back?" asked Old King Brady.

"No, she sees some one coming around the corner whose appearance seems to startle her," replied Harry.

"Who is it? Can you make out?"

"Looks like two swells. Here they come into plain sight."

From their concealment behind the shed, the two detectives watched the young girl.

She was accosted by a well-dressed man, who raised his shining silk hat, at the same time grasping her by the wrist.

The moment the man did this, Violet uttered a stifled shriek, recoiled, and made an effort to tear her hand free.

"Let me go!" she cried.

"Silence!" roared the fashionable rascal.

The next moment he clapped a handkerchief saturated with chloroform over her face, lifted her in his arms, and rushed around the corner with the struggling girl as if she were a mere infant.

The Bradys were astonished at his brazen effrontery.

"An abduction!" gasped Harry.

"Rush for them!" replied the old detective.

Darting from their covert, they rushed toward the corner.

The man who carried the girl was a handsomely clothed fellow of about thirty, with black hair and a black mustache.

His companion was about the same age, and wore a spring overcoat, a felt hat, and had on a pair of eye-glasses.

Unlike the other, he had a light mustache and light hair.

The Bradys had gained such an excellent view of the pair that they would recognize them if they ever met again.

When the detectives reached the corner, they beheld a coupe with dark green wheels, drawn by a big bay horse. The driver had a clean-shaven face, and wore a silk hat with a rosette at the side, and dark blue livery trimmed with silver buttons.

The moment the detectives saw this rig, they recognized it as the same carriage from which the shot came that wounded Violet Gray.

The girl and her abductors were just disappearing inside the carriage.

"See! See!" excitedly cried Harry, pointing at them. "They are trying to get away with her in that carriage."

"The outfit corresponds with her description of the one from which she was shot this morning," panted Old King Brady, "and it's safe to say that one or both of those fellows are the hidden assassins who tried to kill her."

While speaking they kept running toward the carriage.

Not a sound came from the girl.

It led the detectives to infer that she had succumbed to a drug, and was senseless.

Just as they turned the corner, the driver saw them.

Realizing that they were hurrying to the girl's rescue, he suddenly struck his horse with the whip, and it sprang away.

The detectives raced after it.

"Hold on there, or I'll shoot you!" Harry yelled at the driver.

The man paid no heed to the stern mandate, but lashed his horse unmercifully, and the animal rushed on faster.

Realizing that the villains would escape, Young King Brady drew a revolver from his hip pocket and took quick aim at the driver.

Bang! went the weapon.

Just then the coupe swerved, and the ball missed its mark.

Each moment the breach was widening between pursuers and pursued, and Harry discharged his pistol a second time.

The shot brought a policeman dashing into the street ahead of the racing detectives, and he sprang at Old King Brady.

They met with a crash and fell to the pavement.

Harry rushed on, knowing his partner could take care of himself, and determined not to lose sight of the flying vehicle.

"If I lose that carriage, heaven only knows what the girl's fate will be!" the boy muttered.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE GHETTO.

Fearing interference from more of the police if he fired again, Harry thrust his pistol back into his pocket and raced on.

The cab had gained a lead of over a block, and was steadily gaining.

But the plucky boy did not despair.

He was a good runner, and felt confident that he could keep the equipage in view for some time to come.

The driver glanced back several times, and caught a view of the boy's dogged perseverance with a feeling of intense alarm.

He knew he could not go on at that mad pace long through the streets of New York without attracting attention, and getting arrested for breaking one of the strictest ordinances.

Moreover, there was a limit to the endurance of his horse.

Ten blocks were thus covered, when Harry suddenly heard the furious clatter of horses' hoofs behind him, and the clash and rumble of wheels.

Glancing back, he saw another cab.

It was coming along as fast as the other, and was overtaking him.

The boy was startled, and panted:

"What the deuce does this mean—more of them?"

Presently the pursuing carriage overtook him.

"Harry!" shouted a well-known voice in the vehicle.

"Old King Brady!" laughed the amazed boy.

"Yes. Stop, I'll pick you up!"

The cab stopped, the door flew open, and the boy jumped in.

Off went the vehicle again in pursuit of the other.

"What the dickens does this mean?" panted the winded boy.

"Just this," answered Old King Brady, quietly, "I wasn't going to let any officious cop stop me, so I picked the one who bumped into me up, flung him down an area without making any explanations, and seeing this cab passing, I engaged it at a premium to keep the other in view, and came on in pursuit of you."

Harry laughed heartily.

"I'm glad you acted so promptly," he exclaimed. "It's a great deal easier to chase those fellows in a cab than on foot."

"Just look out the window now and see where we are."

"By Jove, they are leading us right straight into the Ghetto of New York."

"What in thunder are they doing over here on the East Side?"

"Probably trying to shake us off their trail."

"That's impossible! Can you see what street we've turned into?"

Harry thrust his head out the cab window.

Watching the lamp posts as they flew by, he detected the name.

"That was Fifth street we passed through," he remarked, as he withdrew his head; "but we've turned into Essex now, and are going downtown again as fast as we can."

Old King Brady peered out.

Jews were swarming in the doors and windows of the filthy tenements, and crowds of them were moving about

the sidewalks patronizing the dirty little grocery stores, butcher shops and bakeries.

Scores of push-cart men were lined up along the curbs with smoking lamps displaying their cheap assortment of clothing, fake jewelry, fruit, and gew-gaws.

The street reeked with mud and refuse.

In some of the dimly lit rooms were the miserable sweatshops where the unfortunate white slaves were obliged to work all day and all night to gain the barest living.

Few people know the abject misery that prevails in that squalid neighborhood, and the wonder is that crime is not more prevalent where men willing to work must view their families starving around them, simply because no chance is accorded them to earn a living.

The fugitive cab had gained a point not far from the corner of Stanton street, when a big, fat policeman rushed around the corner and made a plunge at the push cart men.

The average New York policeman seems to take a special delight in arresting, or driving these poor wretches from pillar to post.

As the peddlers look upon the patrolmen as their natural enemies, these men grabbed the handles of their wagons and scattered out in the middle of the street like a flock of frightened sheep.

It was an unlucky move.

The flying coupe crashed through them before the driver could rein in his horse, men and wagons were knocked over, their goods were sent flying in all directions, and some of the carts were wrecked.

Loud yells arose on all sides.

The coupe driver swore at them furiously.

An empty truck was standing close by, and the now frightened and plunging horse swung the carriage against one of the truck wheels.

There came a fearful crash.

The rear axle of the coupe snapped in two.

Down went the carriage on one side, the door flew open, as the driver gained control of his horse, and out jumped Violet's abductor.

"Hand me the girl, Barney Sullivan—quick, or we're lost!" he panted.

"Bedad, she's as limp as a rag, Simon Isaacs," answered the light-complexioned fellow, as he passed the girl out to his companion, and leaped out himself. "Can you manage her?"

"Easily. Come, we are close to the joint we were heading for."

"And sure, the detectives are close at our heels."

"Blast them!" hissed the other, glaring fiendishly at the on-coming cab, "if they dare to follow us into Aaron Levy's place, they'll wish they'd never been born!"

Just as they darted away, the policeman across the street shouted:

"Was the lady hurt?"

"Only fainted," replied Isaacs.

And the next moment he dashed into a dark alley with his friend, and they vanished from view.

The policeman saw where they went with a look of as-

tonishment, for he knew that alley led to one of the worst resorts in the city.

But he made no comment.

Instead of going to the assistance of the unfortunate push-cart men, who were nearly ruined by the collision, he hastened to aid the driver of the coupe, who was trying to drive off on three wheels.

Just as the Brady's carriage reached the spot, the coupe whirled around the corner, looking as if at any moment it would tip over.

The cab stopped, and the detectives alighted.

They had witnessed the whole occurrence.

Seeing that friendly and sympathetic people were rushing to the aid of the weeping push-cart men, who could expect no redress for the damage done to them, the Bradys ran over to the policeman.

"Hello there, officer!" Harry shouted at him.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded the policeman.

"Did you see where the people went who alighted from that cab?"

"Yes. They ran up that alley with the lady."

"Why didn't you stop them when you saw the girl was drugged?"

"Drugged?" echoed the policeman, in amazement.

"That's what I said."

"But they said she fainted. I heard them call each other Barney Sullivan and Simon Isaacs."

"Humbug—they lied! I'm glad you gave us their names."

"Are they friends of yours?"

"We are trying to arrest them."

"For what?"

"Abduction."

"Gee whiz! Are you detectives?"

"Of course we are, and we were chasing them."

"I sec. What's up?"

"Oh, never mind the details. Come on, Old King Brady. We have no time to lose. They may escape us."

And so saying, Harry darted into the alley, followed by his partner.

It was very dark, and the flag pavement was quite slippery.

At the end of the alley they saw a court yard, back of which stood a rear shanty in the last stages of dilapidation.

Dim lights glowed in the window.

Old King Brady now realized where they were going, as he had been in that place before, and he said to Harry:

"Do you know where we are?"

"Have no idea," the boy replied.

"That shanty in the rear is Aaron Levy's fence. It's the most notorious place of its kind in the city. Every thief in the country knows and deals with Levy. He's the greatest receiver of stolen property we have."

"I've heard you speak of him before."

"Well, you'll soon have the pleasure of seeing the old villain; and it is quite evident these two crooks are friends of his. Once the girl is confined in that shanty, we'll have

to reckon on passing a horde of russians to reach her, and they are likely enough to fight for her abductors."

"Get out your gun, then."

Reaching the yard, they glanced around.

It was a small space, filled with an overhanging maze of fire-escapes, and overshadowed by numerous pulley lines.

There was a brick pavement, and high fences on each side.

Harry tried the rear door of the front tenement, and found it locked.

"They couldn't climb over those high fences," he remarked, "and as this door is locked, it's unlikely they returned to the street through the hall. It is therefore probable they passed into the rear house."

"We'll soon see," replied Old King Brady.

And approaching the door, he pushed it open and led the way into a gloomy, foul-odored hallway.

"Levy!" he shouted. "Hey, Aaron, open your door!"

CHAPTER VI.

FIGHTING IN THE DARK.

No response was given to Old King Brady's shout, but the detectives heard the hurried patter of flying footsteps behind one of the doors.

Harry pulled a dark lantern from his breast pocket and lit it.

As he flashed the brilliant rays about, they saw that they were in a narrow, gloomy hall, with a flight of stairs at the rear.

"Does the fence occupy the whole shanty?" whispered the boy.

"Yes," Old King Brady answered, in low tones, "and it looks to me as if he did not intend to admit us to his rooms."

"Break down the door."

"Keep your gun handy."

"What for?"

"There are generally a number of crooks hanging about the place, and as both Simon Isaacs and Barney Sullivan seem to be in league with Levy, his friends will doubtless fight for him if we attack them."

Harry nodded and drew his pistol.

"There can't be a much tougher place than this in Essex street," he muttered. "But I guess we are equal to those gents."

"Are you ready?"

"Yes; smash it!"

They rushed at the door and struck it with terrific force.

There came a violent crash; the lock was broken, and as the door flew in, the Bradys plunged head first into a dark room.

"Here they come!" hissed a voice in the gloom.

The detectives paused and peered around.

"Levy!" Old King Brady shouted, in threatening tones, "you had better show yourself, old man, or it will be the worse for you."

There was a moment of silence.

Then a muffled voice exclaimed in nasal tones:

"Shendlmens, vot yer vant in here?"

"We want that girl!" roared the old detective, angrily.

"Ach, dere don't vos some girl mit mein blace alretty!"

"You lie! Produce her, or I'll have the joint turned inside out."

No reply was vouchsafed.

Harry flashed his light around the room.

It was a sort of office, with a desk at one end of the counter. The walls were covered with shelving, divided into small compartments, each of which contained bundles and packages of miscellaneous articles.

To all appearances it was a typical pawnbroker's shop.

At the rear was a door in the partition.

When the light darted upon it, Young King Brady saw Levy.

He was a little old Jew with long, gray, curly hair, the top of his crown was bald, and he wore a skull cap of black velvet perched on the back of his head. Bushy gray eyebrows shaded his narrow and cunning little eyes, he had a huge hooked nose, and a kinky beard covered the rest of his face.

Clad in a long gown, and wearing carpet-slippers, he was crouching in the doorway, furtively peering out at them.

"There he is!" Harry muttered.

"Collar him!" Old King Brady answered.

They made a rush for the old villain, but he saw them coming and scampered away into the little living room in the rear.

Before he got half way across the room, Harry pounced on him, seized him by the back of the neck, and cried:

"I've got you!"

"Mutter of Moses!" groaned the fence.

"Now, keep quiet, or we'll run you in."

"Yer vos got der wrong man," shouted the old fellow energetically. "I didn't done noddings. I don't know me dot woman's you wanted. Oh, holy Abraham, do I look like a crook?"

Harry could hardly suppress a smile at this question, as he knew the man to be one of the worst in the city.

"No, you don't look like a crook," said the boy, sarcastically. "You look like a real nice, respectable old gentleman; that's why we came to you and expected you to give up the young lady and her two captors. Now, what have you done with them, Aaron? Own up like a gentleman. If you don't, I'll wring your neck as I would a chicken's!"

"Helb! Helb!" roared the Jew, raising both hands.

There sounded a quick patter of footsteps behind an old chintz curtain in the side wall, and the rag was swept aside.

In the opening stood a gang of rough-looking men, with masks on their faces to conceal their identity.

Every one of them wielded a pistol.

As they aimed their weapons at the detectives, with the evident intention of firing at them, Harry grabbed the Jew.

He swung the cowering old wretch around between himself and the crooks, and Old King Brady dashed behind the boy.

"If you fire, you'll hit this man!" cried the young detective.

The villains were startled.

They dared not shoot, and a deathly silence ensued.

Shaking and pale, Levy almost sank to the floor with fear.

"Don'd shoot!" he groaned. "Don'd kill your oldt friendt, poys!"

Seeing his advantage, Harry exclaimed:

"If you fellows don't clear out, it will go hard with Levy."

"You let him go!" retorted one of the thieves.

"Not on your life!"

"We'll make you do it."

And the whole party rushed into the room.

Seeing a fight was imminent, Harry hurled the old Jew against the foremost man.

He was knocked down, but the next moment the rest reached the detectives, and Harry pocketed his lantern.

The room instantly became enshrouded in gloom, and the Bradys crouched down close to the floor.

It was lucky they did.

Three pistols were discharged at the spot where they had been standing, and the bullets whistled through the air over their heads and were imbedded in the wall.

Locating their enemies by the flashes of their weapons, the Bradys each fired a shot toward them.

Two yells of anguish arose.

"I'm hit!" groaned an agonized voice.

"Run or we'll get killed!" added another.

The detectives heard their footsteps receding.

"We've got them going!" chuckled Harry.

"Follow them, but don't show your light."

Without making the slightest noise, the detectives crept across the floor, and passing behind the curtain, they heard the thieves going up a flight of stairs.

Up dashed the Bradys after them.

Reaching the top, they heard a voice ask hoarsely:

"Are they coming?"

"Don't hear 'em!" replied another.

"They must have been hit by our shots."

"Of course. As we outnumber them, we ought to down that pair. They are the Bradys, and I owe them a grudge for once having me sent up the river for three years."

"Give them another shot to surprise them, Harry," said Old King Brady, just then.

Once more their pistols rang out.

The astonished crooks gave a wild yell, and the next moment the detectives heard them running for their lives.

The crooks could not get downstairs without passing the Bradys, and realizing this, they went up a ladder to the roof.

Old King Brady divined their intention.

Wishing to get rid of them entirely, he cried:

"Follow them, Harry!"

The next moment they both ascended the ladder to the tin roof.

Here they caught a view of the four crooks.

They were sliding down a big pulley-line pole which stood at the front of the shanty for the benefit of the tenants in the front tenement.

Down they went rapidly.

Another shot over their heads from Harry's pistol kept them moving at top speed, and when they reached the court yard and rushed for the alley, Old King Brady gave them a parting shot.

When the last man vanished, Harry exclaimed:

"Now for Levy!"

They hastened down through the scuttle.

Reaching the rooms below, they failed to find the old Jew, and began to search the premises, convinced he was hiding.

Reaching the living room behind the store, they flashed the light of the lantern around, but failed to see him.

"He must be hiding about the premises," said Old King Brady. "He wouldn't run away and leave all these valuables unguarded."

"Where are we to look for him?" asked Harry, in puzzled tones.

"Try the cellar."

As they started to cross the floor, a square trap in the middle of the room suddenly gave way beneath their feet.

The next moment they plunged down into a dark hole, and landed in the cellar below, stunned and helpless.

A chuckle escaped Levy as he stepped from within a closet where he operated the mechanism which precipitated the officers into the gloomy abyss.

CHAPTER VII.

TO BE BURIED ALIVE.

"Harry!"

"Well, Old King Brady?"

"Do you know where we are?"

"Looks like a grave."

It was an hour later when this dialogue occurred.

The Bradys had recovered their senses, and found themselves bound hand and foot.

They were lying in a hole dug four feet in the ground in the middle of the cellar, and a dim lantern standing on a heap of loose earth piled up beside the excavation showed them their weird surroundings.

It was a grave, and it had been dug for their reception.

The damp, mouldy earth struck a cold chill through the pair, and they heard a low, sibilant laugh and observed a man peering down at them.

It was the stylish Simon Isaacs.

He eyed the pair a few moments with a grin on his face, and finally asked:

"Well, how do you like your quarters?"

"Did you put us in this hole?" demanded Harry.

"I did."

"What for?"

"To bury you alive."

"You are a fiend!"

"Am I? Well, I know how to dispose of my enemies."

"What in thunder are you trying to kill us for?"

"To effectually end your chase after me."

"Then you had reason to fear us, eh?"

"If I didn't you wouldn't be there."

"Evidently. Now, see here, Simon Isaacs——"

"That's my name."

"You tried to shoot Violet Gray from within a passing cab, didn't you?"

"I won't deny it."

"Finding you failed of your purpose this morning, you waited for her to-night, and abducted her?"

"As you witnessed the whole occurrence, you ought to know."

"We did; but we cannot fathom your reason for wishing to put that poor, innocent girl out of the way."

"You'll never learn the motive from me."

"But you have a motive?"

"Of course. People don't do those things for nothing."

"Are you acting for yourself, or for some one else?"

"I am acting for myself exclusively."

"You say you intend to bury us alive?"

"That's my exact intention."

"Simply because we are trying to save that girl."

"That's one reason."

"What other reason have you?"

"You know too much for my safety. You've seen my face, and that of my friend, Barney Sullivan. If we were to let you go, it would not be long before you'd have us both in jail. We know you are the most dangerous detectives in the Secret Service, and we ain't going to run any chances with such men as you two are."

"That is quite a compliment to our skill," said Harry, to prolong the conversation, so he and his partner could better study the face, voice and ideas of this mysterious fellow.

"Oh, we've heard all about you fellows," said the man, "and we are not fools enough to think you would let us escape once you got the nippers on our wrists. I'll tell you frankly, Brady, that I'm determined to sweep Violet Gray from the face of the earth, and I'll let nothing stop me. In fact, the evidence is before you that I'll brook no interference. I stand ready to kill you and crush any one else who dares to interfere with my plans!"

"What a powerful motive must actuate you!"

"It is far more powerful than you imagine. I've been waiting a long time for this chance to come, and now that I'm embarked in the game, you can bet your life I'm going to bring it to a finish!"

"Which means that you are actuated by spite, jealousy or any other motive except self-gain," commented Harry.

The man flushed and started.

An ugly look spread over his dark face.

"Never mind my motive," he growled, in sour tones.

"Why are you so reticent, if you are about to kill us? Dead men tell no tales, you know. And as we are soon to die, why should you be afraid to gratify our natural curiosity to know why you want to kill that girl? I'm quite sure no one will hear it from us after we are dead."

"You ain't dead yet," was the significant reply.

"Of course not," replied Young King Brady, quietly.

"Well, there's no sense in telling you anything more, You know too much now. If you didn't know so much, you wouldn't be here. I shall tell you no more."

"Suit yourself. Levy must be in the game, too, or he would not aid you to put us out of the way, as he has done."

"He would do anything for money."

"I believe you."

"You'd better say your prayers now. You haven't long to live."

"Why don't you shoot us, or——"

But Isaacs did not wait to hear the rest of the suggestion, for he suddenly disappeared from view.

For several moments the detectives heard no sound, although they strained their ears, and Old King Brady remarked:

"He's a cold-blooded villain."

"A man of mystery, Old King Brady."

"What can his motive be?"

"Money, I suppose."

"Perhaps. He spoke of having much to gain by the girl's death. If it's money, it must be a great deal, if I'm to judge by the way he is willing to sacrifice life by the wholesale in order to gain it."

"What puzzles me is how he can gain money by the death of Violet Gray. She's a poor shop girl and hasn't an enemy."

"By questioning her we might solve the mystery."

"I hope that man hasn't already killed her."

"No telling. If he hasn't, he certainly will."

"But we can't allow it."

"How can we stop him? You seem to forget that we are as badly off as Violet Gray is. There seems to be no escape for us from this hole. He's bound to kill us because he fears us."

"Oh, I don't think he will."

"Do you know of any means to escape?"

"No," answered Harry.

"Then why speak that way?"

"Simply because I've got a feeling that we'll escape him yet."

"I wish I could be as hopeful as you are."

An interval of silence then ensued between them and they both became wrapped up in their thoughts until there came a rude interruption.

A shovelful of dirt descended upon them.

"They're filling in the grave," said Harry.

"Harry, this is a horrible way to perish."

"We can't gain anything by shouting. No one in the street would hear our voices. May as well resign ourselves for awhile, and—"

Down came another clod of dirt upon him just then, and they now heard the voices of two men conversing in whispers above.

"They've commenced in earnest now," said Old King Brady, and the dirt was thrown in rapidly upon them.

The lower part of their bodies and legs caught most of it.

Shovelful after shovelful of dirt now began to rapidly fall down on them, and their bodies were completely covered.

It was evident that two men were filling in the hole, for the dirt came down from both sides of the grave at once.

Hearing the voice of Sullivan gave them to understand who the other person was, and Old King Brady gasped:

"I may as well bid you good-by, Harry."

"Nonsense!" was the boy's cool rejoinder. "We ain't dead yet, and—"

But just then a shovelful of dirt came down, completely burying the boy's head and bruising his face.

Old King Brady groaned.

He hated to die like a rat in a trap.

"Isaacs?" he shouted.

No reply came back, but the dirt kept on descending for several minutes and Old King Brady was covered.

It looked as if the detectives' doom was sealed.

More earth came down.

In a few minutes the detectives would have been buried so deep under the ground that they would have been smothered.

But at this point there came a startling interruption.

It was a pistol shot.

"I'm hit!" yelled Sullivan.

"Cops!" gasped Isaacs. "Put out the light!"

Crash went the lantern as a shovel struck it a violent blow which smashed it to fragments.

In an instant the cellar was wrapped in gloom.

The detectives heard the shot.

It renewed their courage.

"I knew we were not destined to perish in this miserable manner," Harry muttered. "Who could have fired that shot?"

CHAPTER VIII.

WHY WAS THE GIRL ATTACKED?

"Hello! Is there any one down there?"

When this shout reached Old King Brady's ears he violently shook his head, throwing the dirt away from his face.

The voice was somewhat familiar, and yet it was a stranger's. That neither Isaacs, Sullivan nor Levy uttered the cry he was sure.

The old detective got his mouth free.

"Help! Help! Help!" he shouted.

After a few moments' silence the voice above cried out: "Who is that?"

"Old King Brady!" replied the detective.

"Jerusalem! Whercabout are you?"

"Buried in this hole in the floor."

"Wait until I get a light."

The detectives were overjoyed, for they expected deliverance from the difficulty they were in, although they did not know who to expect it from.

After the lapse of five minutes a light flashed down in the hole.

It came from a candle in the hands of a policeman.

As he peered down in the excavation he demanded:

"Where are you?"

"Buried in this dirt," answered Harry, who, too, freed his face.

"Can't you get out?"

"No; we are bound hand and foot."

"Just wait, and I'll come down to you."

The officer carefully let himself down into the trench, and finding the two detectives, he exhumed their bodies.

When this was done he cut their bonds and they all climbed out of the grave, and Old King Brady demanded:

"What has become of our enemies?"

"I drove them out with my pistol," replied the policeman.

"Ah! And how did you chance to come in here so opportunely?"

"Well, I knew you both came in here, and I didn't see you come out. It made me suspect foul play. I therefore made up my mind to enter and find out what became of you. Soon after I came to the conclusion I heard pistol shots, and saw four men rush out of the alley."

"They were crooks we drove out."

"I recognized them as crooks."

"What became of them?"

"They ran around the corner and disappeared."

"Didn't you try to stop them?"

"Yes, but they got away from me."

"Well, what happened next?"

"I came in here and found the place in gloom."

"Wasn't Levy about?"

"No. It made me suspicious. I hid and watched for him. After a time I saw him go down the cellar with a candle."

"And you followed him?"

"Not right away. When I did, I saw the two men filling this hole."

"Was it you who fired at them?"

"Yes; I suspected foul play."

"Well, you hit one."

"So I believe. But they've bolted."

"Can't you find any of them?"

"No; not one."

"Queer where they went so fast."

"Very; but they've gone, and—"

"Hark! What's that?"

They listened.

For a few moments nothing was heard.

Then a low, faint cry reached their ears.

"Help! Help!" exclaimed the voice.

"By Jove, it sounds like Violet Gray," said Harry, in surprise.

"Evidently a female's voice," the policeman replied.

"I can't seem to locate it!" growled Old King Brady.

They listened again.

Hearing nothing more, Harry shouted:

"Hey! Hello, hello, Miss Gray!"

"Save me!" came the smothered reply.

"Where are you?"

"Here! In here!"

Guided by the voice, Harry traced the sound to a door in the front wall, leading into a vault before the house.

It was fastened with a padlock.

Kicking at the door, he shouted:

"Are you in there?"

"Yes, yes!" came the answer.

The boy turned to his companions.

"Bring that pickaxe here!" he cried.

"Is she in there?" asked Old King Brady, complying.

"Yes, indeed. See if you can rip out those staples."

Old King Brady inserted the pick in one of the staples, and as the policeman helped him he pulled it out.

The lock was rendered useless.

Harry flung open the door and Violet rushed out.

She gazed at them a moment and then a glad cry escaped her.

"Oh, Mr. Brady!"

"By jingo, we've got you at last!" cried Harry.

"I'm so glad you have come."

"So this is where those men put you, eh?"

"Some one did it. I was drugged, and don't know where I am, as I only just recovered from a stupor."

"Well, you are safe enough. We'll protect you now."

"Did the two men do this who abducted me?"

"Yes. We've been on your trail ever since they got you."

"Then you saw them attack me on the corner of Crosby and Grand?"

"We did."

"Do you know who they are?"

"No. Do you?"

"I don't."

"Don't you know why you were abducted?"

"No; I haven't the remotest idea."

"That's very strange."

"I should say so."

"What object could they have had?"

"That's a mystery to me."

"As much a mystery as was the attempt on your life?"

"Equally as much, Mr. Brady."

The detectives looked astonished.

Why were these villains trying so hard to put this poor shop girl out of the way? they wondered.

There was no apparent reason for it.

Nothing could be gained, evidently, except revenge.

But why revenge?

Harry asked her:

"Do you know of any reason any one might have to seek your life or liberty in this remarkable manner?"

"I do not," was the emphatic reply of the girl.

"Can't you think of any enemies?"

"I haven't any."

"Well, you puzzle us."

"I am mystified myself, Mr. Brady."

"Let us get out of here," suggested Old King Brady, brusquely. They went upstairs, and Harry and the policeman made a careful search of the premises, but failed to find Isaacs, Sullivan or Levy. The three villains were well hidden.

Before the Bradys left the fence Harry said to the policeman:

"Should Levy or his two pals return, arrest them on sight. They are responsible for the abduction of this girl."

"Very well, Mr. Brady."

"Although the old fence didn't have a hand in stealing the girl, he was an accessory, as he permitted them to imprison her in his place, and that makes him as guilty as they are."

"So I've seen."

The Bradys then departed.

Upon reaching Stanton street they failed to see the broken carriage, but they learned from some of the neighbors that the driver had gone away with the outfit some time previously.

"The whole bunch have escaped us!" said Harry.

"Never mind," said Old King Brady, quietly. "We've baffled them by wresting their prisoner from them, and we may run across the rascals again."

"Let's take Miss Gray home."

The girl was glad to hear this suggestion.

They started off, and soon reached the flat where she resided. Leaving her at the door, Old King Brady said:

"You're safe enough now. Go to work to-morrow as if nothing happened, and depend we will keep constant guard over you until we solve this mystery."

She promised, and went in.

The Bradys then went away.

They had plenty of food for reflection over the case.

CHAPTER IX.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY.

True to her promise, Violet Gray did not mention at the shop what happened to her, when she went to work next day.

At nightfall she went home, ignorant that the Bradys were closely dogging her footsteps, and disappeared in the flat.

The girl had hardly been in the house a quarter of an hour when the detectives saw a district messenger boy enter the flat.

As soon as they saw him depart Harry remarked:

"That looks suspicious."

"We'd better investigate it," replied Old King Brady.

"By all means."

"Come on, then."

Crossing the street, they entered the flat.

Violet met them at the parlor door, and looked surprised.

She had her hat and coat on, as if to go out.

"Why," she exclaimed, smilingly, "the Bradys."

"Yes," replied Harry. "How are you?"

"Very well. Come in."

"Thank you, we shall. Were you going out?"

"I was, in answer to a summons."

"From whom, may I ask?"

"Ralph Morgan, my gentleman friend."

"Indeed! Does he usually send messenger boys after you?"

"No; this is the first time he ever did it. But how did you know?"

"Oh, we saw the boy enter."

"I see," said Violet, closing the door after them.

"It made us suspicious," continued Harry, glancing around the cosy little parlor. "That's why we entered in."

"What were you suspicious of?"

"That message. Are you quite sure it's from Mr. Morgan?"

"It is signed with his name."

"But is it written in his handwriting?"

"No."

"Do you mind telling us what it says?"

"Here, read it."

She handed him a yellow envelope, printed with the name of the Western Union Telegraph Company, and addressed to her.

Harry took a telegraph blank from it on which was written:

"Dear Violet: Just met with an accident. Come and see me at once. Am in the Gouverneur Slip Hospital. Nothing serious." RALPH."

A faint smile crossed Harry's face.

"It's a new trap!" he exclaimed, handing the paper to Old King Brady.

"Evidently," agreed the old detective, reading the message.

"What do you mean by that?" queried Violet, in surprise.

"Your enemies are at work again," replied Harry.

"My enemies? Why, didn't Ralph send me that telegram?"

"This isn't a telegram."

"It isn't?"

"No; simply a note sent by a messenger written on a telegraph blank to deceive you."

"Good gracious!"

"If it isn't Mr. Morgan's writing it's a forgery."

"Oh, he didn't write that."

"You ought to know."

"Don't you think he's in the hospital?"

"No. If he were, he'd telegraph you, I'm sure."

"I thought that was a telegram."

"You were deluded."

"I'm glad you've found out the deception in time."

"We shall prove our surmise."

"How can you do so?"

"By having you keep the engagement. We will follow you. If it's from your unknown enemy, we think he will pounce on you when you reach the lonely slip where the hospital is located. We shall be on hand to give him a warm reception."

"But I'm afraid to go now."

"Nonsense. You must keep the engagement."

"I may get in trouble again if I do."

"We will protect you, I tell you."

"Are you sure you can?"

"Of course."

"Then I'll risk it, so you can arrest the villain."

"Good girl! That's the sort of pluck I admire."

"I'll make quite a good decoy, won't I?"

"Yes, indeed. It may lead to the arrest of your enemy, and the exposure of his reason for so persistently attacking you," said Harry.

"I'd run the risk just to bring that about, Mr. Brady."

"That's the right sort of talk."

Just then they heard the rustle of a dress and a soft footstep in the private hall, and glancing around, the detectives saw Violet's mother.

She was a kind-faced old lady, with snowy hair and soft brown eyes behind a pair of spectacles, and wore a black dress.

Seeing the detectives, she paused hesitatingly on the threshold.

A smile crossed Violet's pretty face, and she cried:

"Hello, here's mother. Come in, mamma, till I introduce you to the Bradys. They are my friends, the Secret Service detectives I told you about."

The widow advanced into the room.

She bowed to the detectives, and said in low, sweet tones:

"Gentlemen, I am pleased to meet you. My daughter has frequently spoken of you to me, and I owe you a debt of gratitude."

"My dear Mrs. Gray," replied Old King Brady, "the pleasure is certainly returned. We have a deep interest in your daughter, and we wish to again save her from falling into the hands of her vindictive enemies."

"So I understand by what I've heard you say to Violet."

"Are you satisfied to let her aid us?"

"Certainly, if it will serve the ends of justice."

"Thank you. We need her. She will be very safe."

"I am sure of that, Mr. Brady."

"Do you think, madam, that you can shed any light upon these very mysterious attacks upon your daughter?"

An odd expression flitted over the placid countenance of Violet's mother, and a frown gathered upon her white brow as she replied:

"I fear not, unless it is the work of some spiteful and vengeful man whom she may have refused to associate with."

"Do you know of any?"

"No."

"How about your family affairs?"

"I don't understand your meaning, sir."

"We would like to know something about your family."

"Really, there is very little to tell."

"Well, let us have it," said Old King Brady.

"I was married to Philip Gray, an Englishman, nineteen years ago, with the full consent of my parents, who died soon after Violet was born," said the old lady. "My husband was a good man, and had a prosperous business. When he died, ten years ago, he left nothing behind but his private papers, however, and since then I supported my daughter by giving music lessons. A year ago Violet helped me to defray our modest expenses by securing a position in the shop of Midley & Co."

"Is that all?"

"That is all, sir."

"Your parents left no money?"

"No; my father failed in business."

"How about your husband's family?"

"His parents lived in Liverpool. He often told me they were wealthy, and that he expected to inherit all their money some day, in spite of his stepbrother, the son of his stepmother."

"What was his stepbrother's name?"

"I forgot. He was a wild young chap, who at an early age ran away from home, and never was heard of again by the old folks."

"I wish I knew his name."

"Perhaps I can learn it by looking over my husband's private papers."

"Do so by all means. What were those papers?"

"Oh, my husband's baptismal certificate, his naturalization papers, his discharge from the army, letters from his parents, and so on."

And so saying, Mrs. Gray left the room.

While she was gone the detectives chatted with Violet.

In a quarter of an hour Mrs. Gray returned smilingly and said:

"I've found the name, Mr. Brady."

"Good! What was it?"

"My husband's stepbrother's name was Jasper Woods."

"What!" roared Old King Brady in startled tones.

"My goodness!" added Violet, in equal astonishment.

Harry said nothing, but glanced at his partner meaningly.

Mrs. Gray could not understand their surprise, though, so she asked:

"Why has my mention of that name so astonished you all?"

"Because," replied Harry, "the trusted cashier of Midley & Co., who recently absconded with \$50,000, was named Jasper Woods."

It was now Mrs. Gray's turn to look amazed.

When she finally recovered her composure she asked:

"Do you think he was my husband's stepbrother?"

"We can't swear to it, of course," replied Old King Brady, "but I must say we have the strongest kind of suspicion that your husband's stepbrother and Midley & Co.'s defaulting cashier are one and the same person."

CHAPTER X.

DOWN BY THE RIVER.

There was no evidence to prove the detectives' suspicions, of course, so they could only discuss the discovery from an uncertain standpoint.

It was impossible to verify it, with the thieving cashier missing.

They resolved, however, to find out the truth of the matter if they ever were fortunate enough to encounter the man again.

"If the Jasper Woods you speak of ran away from home at an early age and never was heard of again," said Old King Brady, finally, "he may have come to America, and might have been in the employ of Midley & Co. all these years."

"And to think the old cashier was a sort of uncle of mine, and I knew nothing about it all this time," laughed Violet. "I used to think the old fool was in love with me. Now wouldn't it be queer if he knew all the while that I was his stepbrother's daughter?"

"Did he ever question you about your parents?" asked Harry.

"Oh, yes. On the day after he first called here he questioned me very closely about my father, and I told him papa's whole history. But he made no comment about it, and I forgot the circumstance."

"Mrs. Gray, did he ever mention family matters to you?"

"Never. He was always polite and gentlemanly."

"Well," said Harry after a pause, "it seems to me that if the old cashier were your brother-in-law, he would have mentioned it to you. As he didn't, it's fair to presume he wasn't Mr. Gray's stepbrother."

"I quite agree with you, Mr. Brady, unless——"

"Unless what?"

"He had an object in keeping his identity concealed."

"Why should he at that time?"

"Who knows?" replied the lady, shrugging her shoulders. "He may not have wished us to know anything about himself."

They finished discussing the subject, then Harry said: "We'd better be off for the hospital now."

For a moment Violet looked nervous and uneasy.

"Which way shall I go?" she asked.

"Better ride over in a Grand street car to Scammel street, and walk through to Gouverneur slip," said Old King Brady.

"Very well," assented the girl, and she kissed her mother and went out.

As the detectives started to follow her the widow placed a detaining hand on Old King Brady's arm and said to him entreatingly:

"This is a sacrifice on my part."

"You are a good woman to make it."

"It's for her sake. I want to get rid of her mysterious enemy, for I am half maddened with anxiety when I think of the danger she is exposed to while that villain remains at liberty."

"That's quite natural."

"You will protect her, won't you?"

"With our lives!" declared the old detective.

"I can trust you."

And so saying she turned away to hide her tears, and the two detectives hastened out after the young girl.

Violet rode across town on a car.

When she alighted and passed through the dirty, narrow, tenement-lined streets, the detectives were not far behind her.

In a short time she reached the great warehouses, down near the East River, and skirted the rear of the new, unoccupied hospital.

The little wooden building was on the east side.

A dingy little saloon stood on the corner of Water and Gouverneur streets, and as the young girl passed it a man's face might have been seen peering out over the top of a window shade at her.

The girl was very nervous, for it was a lonesome and rather low neighborhood, and she saw nothing of the detectives.

No sooner had she passed the saloon alluded to when the door opened and a man in rough clothing, with his cap pulled down over his eyes, rushed out and vented a shrill whistle.

Instantly another tough-looking fellow darted from a doorway near the corner of Front street, and a third sprang from behind the miserable little operating shed outside the hospital.

The next moment the three men made a rush for the girl. Closing in on her from three directions, she could not escape.

She saw her danger and paused.

An involuntary cry of alarm escaped her.

"What's this?" she gasped.

Then she wildly looked around for the detectives.

But she failed to see them.

In a minute more the trio of russians were close to the girl. She was so terror-stricken that she felt like fainting.

But just then the Bradys came around the end of the new hospital and saw her danger at a glance.

"Three at her!" Harry muttered.

"Don't give them a chance, Harry."

"Here goes, then!"

And leveling his revolver, the boy fired a shot.

He rarely missed his mark.

The spiteful crack of the pistol was followed by a yell of agony from one of Violet's assailants.

He staggered and fell in the middle of the street.

Old King Brady saw the other two men pause, glance hurriedly around, and the next moment they rushed away, one of them crying hoarsely:

"Cops!"

Old King Brady fired at the nearest man.

The bullet carried away a piece of cloth from his sleeve, and the pair dodged out of sight around the corner.

"Nab that fellow, Harry."

"Then you follow the others."

"Rely on me to get another, at least."

Away rushed the old detective in hot pursuit of the fugitives.

The shot brought some nurses, surgeons and a policeman rushing from the hospital, while the windows of adjacent tenements were flung open and people thrust out their heads to learn the cause of the disturbance.

Just as Old King Brady disappeared Violet reached Harry, who was hastening toward the fallen man.

"Thank goodness, you've come!" the girl gasped.

"Did any of them hurt you?" asked the boy.

"No. You arrived just in time."

"Run over to the hospital and wait for us."

"Did you kill that man?"

"Merely wounded him."

"I'm glad to hear that," said Violet.

She hastened over to the hospital.

Harry rushed up to the fallen man.

To his surprise he saw that he was the driver of the carriage Isaacs and Sullivan occupied when they carried Violet away.

He was wounded in the hip.

His groans might have been heard a great distance away, as he rolled, writhed and slammed himself about on the cobblestones.

Pausing beside the man, Harry asked:

"Badly hurt?"

"Yes, blast yer! Wasn't it you as chuck'd dat shot inter me carcass?"

"I did, and I see you felt it, too."

"Blast yer, I'll git even fer dat——"

He pulled a revolver from his hip pocket. Leveling it at Young King Brady's head, he pulled the trigger.

Just as he did so Harry kicked the pistol out of his hand, the ball was spent in the air, and the boy pounced on his man.

Quick as a flash he had the fellow handcuffed.

"There! You are quite safe and harmless now."

"Oh, I'll git square wit yez fer dis."

"Will you? It's bound to be at least five years hence, then."

Just then the policeman reached Harry and seized him.

"What d'yer mane be this?" he yelled, flourishing his night stick.

"I mean," laughed Harry, "that I very skillfully winged a crook I was after, and if you don't want blood poisoning to set in, you'd better have him taken over to the hospital at once, and see that the doctors probe for the bullet and dress his wound."

"Are yez a wardman?"

"We are from Secret Service headquarters."

"Oh! Shure an' I tuck yez fer a pair av crooks."

"Here, I'll help you to carry the man over. Take his body."

"I will that."

Harry and the policeman picked up Dan Green, as the crook was named. Carrying him over to the operating room, they laid him down, and as the doctors swarmed around Young King Brady pointed at the man and said:

"Take that bullet out of his hide."

"Very good. He's a prisoner, I presume?"

"An abductor. We are detectives."

"Oh, I see. He'll have to go to the prison ward."

Having abstracted the ball and bound his wound, the chief physician said to Young King Brady:

"He's in bad shape."

"Want to keep him here?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll go after my partner."

CHAPTER XI.

CHASING A HORSE CAR.

The men Old King Brady was chasing were Isaacs and Sullivan, and they were disguised in rough clothing. But he recognized them.

As they ran around the corner the old detective went tearing along after them, carrying his revolver in his hand.

A bend in the river at this point brought the old detective out at a point facing the stream.

He saw the two men running along South street a block in advance.

The street was being widened here by the dock department, and numerous new piers were in course of construction.

A few saloons were shedding their window lights upon the almost deserted street, and the fugitives paused before one of them.

For an instant they hesitated, as if about to plunge into the place. But glancing back, they saw Old King Brady coming along at full speed.

The sight made them change their minds.

Darting across the street, they ran among the heaps of timber to be used in constructing the new docks.

There was a belt line car coming along.

Old King Brady ran after the pair.

He passed them, but did not know it, as they were concealed from view behind the lumber pile.

The detective ran out on a half completed dock and peered around.

Out in the water floated a dredge and a pile driver, several scows filled with broken stone, and some boats.

The detective feared that the fugitives intended to take to the river in one of the skiffs.

Such was not their plan, however.

He peered at the numerous piles rising above the water, and a puzzled look crossed his face when he failed to see his men.

"Where could they have gone?" he muttered, blankly.

Then he glanced around, and his quick, keen eyes fell upon two shadowy figures lurking in a recess in the lumber heap.

"Ah! There they are now!" he exclaimed.

He aimed his pistol and fired at the nearest man.

A stifled cry of pain came back.

The ball had hit Sullivan.

But he was not disabled.

The two men sprang from behind the lumber.

Just then the horse car reached a point opposite where they stood, and they ran for it and sprang aboard.

There were no passengers on the car.

Sullivan aimed his pistol at the driver's head.

"Whip up your team!" he roared. "Drive like fury, or bedad I'll blow the top of your block off!"

The startled driver let go the brake.

Hitting his team with the whip, he sent them flying along at the top of their speed, and gasped:

"Don't fire!"

"Faster, then—faster!"

"Yes—yes!"

The whip flogged the flanks of the astonished horses.

Along dashed the old horse car at a tremendous rate, Old King Brady rushing along in pursuit.

The conductor saw what was happening.

It frightened him, and he sprang to the ground.

Just then Harry came out of Front street and saw the car swing around the curve at Montgomery street and head for the river.

He saw, as it raced away, what was occurring.

The boy was astonished.

He next saw Old King Brady, and heard him shout:

"Head off the car, Harry!"

The boy made a short cut by rushing back through Front street and crossing the slip at an angle.

By this time the two crooks, with their pistols aimed at the car driver's head, had made him speed his team as fast as they could go.

Young King Brady was a swift runner.

He kept gaining steadily on the car.

His partner was far behind.

Reaching Corlears Hook Park, the young detective opened fire with his pistol upon the two men.

The bullets smashed the car windows, and one of them struck Barney Sullivan in the shoulder and made him stagger.

In a moment more the shaking of the car hurled the man into the street, where he struck his head.

Stunned, he lay motionless on his back.

Isaacs saw what happened to his pal, but dared not pause to help him, much as he wished to.

His own liberty was at stake.

The villain was desperate.

Young King Brady paused beside Sullivan.

One glance showed the boy he was not dead.

"Only senseless!" Harry muttered.

He waited until Old King Brady reached him, and said:

"I've dropped one of them."

"So I observe."

"Will you take care of him?"

"Certainly. What are you going to do?"

"Follow the car and try to land the other fellow."

"Go ahead, Harry."

The boy ran on again.

"That was Sullivan we got," he muttered, as he hastened along, "and the chap on the car must be Isaacs!"

The car had gained on him when he paused to look at the senseless man, and the boy now found that he could not overhaul it as fast as he did before.

It ran up Corlears street to Grand, and here Isaacs abandoned it.

By the time Harry reached Grand street he saw the villain getting into a cab, which dashed across town.

Young King Brady was in despair.

He thought the man would get away from him.

But fortune favored the boy.

He followed the cab some distance, and was fast being left far in the rear, when he met with a coach.

Stopping it, he cried to the driver:

"Ten dollars' fare if you'll keep yonder cab in view."

"I'll go you. Get in, sir."

The boy complied, and was whirled along rapidly.

His spirits rose every moment, for he now observed that his vehicle was overhauling the other.

The boy did not want the fugitive to know he was in the coach, as he designed to follow and find out where Isaacs lived.

It would decrease his trouble to arrest the man if he knew where to find him, and he cried to his driver:

"Don't get too near that cab."

"Why not, sir?"

"I don't want the driver or passenger to know we're chasing them."

"Very well, sir; I'll slow down."

"Just keep them in plain view and track them."

"But they're bound to notice us following them
here."

"I presume they will after a while."

"The driver hasn't looked back once yet."

"No? But the passenger might."

"There's no rear window in the cab, sir."

"Have you seen him looking back out of the side windows?"

"Only once—back near Sheriff street."

"Keep watch for him again."

"All right."

The cab kept on until it reached Broadway, into which it turned, and passed swiftly uptown.

Harry's driver began to get nervous.

Several times now Isaacs had glanced back.

It was pretty certain he saw the coach following.

"We must be seen," the driver declared to Harry, finally.

"Let me get out, then, and I'll take to a cable car."

The coach paused, Harry paid the driver, and as the vehicle turned down a side street the boy boarded a car.

As the cab was traveling up Broadway at about the same speed as the car, Young King Brady easily kept the vehicle in view without being seen himself.

At Thirty-fourth street the cab turned east.

Young King Brady alighted.

He followed it down to the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, and saw the inmate of the vehicle alight and dismiss the driver.

But the man had abandoned his rough clothing in the cab, and now showed a fine suit of clothes he had worn underneath.

He passed into the hotel.

Harry followed him, and going to the clerk, he pointed at Isaacs, who was walking away with his room key, and asked:

"Is that man a guest here?"

"Oh, yes," replied the clerk. "That's Simon Isaacs, the rich lawyer. He occupies room 303 on the third floor."

CHAPTER XII.

BRINGING THE PRISONERS TO TERMS.

On the following morning, when Harry strolled into Secret Service headquarters, the first person he saw was his partner.

Old King Brady nodded and smiled, and sang out:

"Well, Harry, what luck did you have?"

"I traced Isaacs to the Waldorf. He lives there."

"Humph!" grunted the old detective. "Must have money to do that."

"Of course. That makes the case all the more mysterious. I can't understand why a rich man like that should stoop to assassination. Nor can I fathom why such a person should wish to kill a poor shop girl."

Old King Brady took a chew of tobacco and reflected. Finally he remarked:

"I've got his two pals in jail."

"Good enough. Could you make them confess anything?"

"Haven't tried yet."

"You must."

"Of course. I intend to."

"Were their wounds dangerous?"

"No; Dan Green is out of danger. Sullivan has three wounds, but they are only skin deep, and will soon heal up."

"How did he manage to get three?"

"One in Levy's cellar, one at the docks, and the one you gave him."

"I see. Where are they?"

"I've got them at police headquarters."

"And Violet Gray?"

"Sent her home in a hack."

"Let's interview the prisoners."

Old King Brady nodded assent, and they went over to Mulberry street and had a conversation with the chief of police.

A few minutes afterward a warden admitted them to the cell in which Dan Green was confined.

He was lying on his cot.

Hearing the detectives entering, he got up, glanced at them with a sullen expression, and snarled:

"Well, what d'youse want here?"

"Just to quiz you a little," replied Old King Brady, quietly.

"I thought so. An' I ain't agoin' ter tell yer nuthin'."

"Oh, yes, you will. You'd be injuring yourself only by refusing."

"How would I?"

"Sullivan is caught, and Isaacs will be. Now, those two men are going to be indicted for murder, and as long as we don't know what your interest in the case is, why, we'll have you indicted with them."

"But I didn't commit no murder," protested the man, in frightened tones.

"Of course you'd say so, but we don't know it as a fact."

"Can't yer take my word fer it?"

"No, of course not. You are a pal of theirs."

"No, I ain't. I'm only Mr. Isaacs' coachman."

"That's what you say. But you can't prove it."

"I can," said the prisoner, energetically. "I only answered an advertisement a few days ago, and met him at ther Waldorf. He'd just bought a team an' a coupe over at Bull's Head, an' kep' 'em in a livery stable. Ther first time as I drove 'em out he took his friend Mr. Sullivan along, an' kep' me movin' up an' down Grand street, awaitin' till a young gal come along. Then he told me ter drive past her at top speed, an' stop fer nuthin'. As we was a-passin' ther gal what should one of 'em do but shoot out ther carriage winder at her."

"Didn't you know they were going to do it?"

"No," declared the coachman, bluntly.

"What happened next?"

"Mr. Isaacs must 'a found out his shot missed her, 'cause he made me wait in Crosby street that night till he an' his

pal grabbed ther gal an' put her in ther carriage. I drove 'em accordin' ter orders ter Essex an' Stanton street——"

"Where you broke a wheel?"

"Yes. I went back ter ther stable with the rig after that."

"But you and those two men attacked the same girl in Gouverneur slip."

"Well, Isaacs told me he only wanted to catch her, an' said if I didn't help him ter do it I'd lose me job."

"Is that all you had to do with the affair?"

"Sure it is. Look what I got fer obeyin' orders."

"That shows you shouldn't mix up in crooked work."

"Well, yer kin bet I don't do it no more."

"It is to be hoped you won't. What do you know about those two men?"

"Nuthin'. They lives at the Waldorf; that's all I can tell yer."

"Don't you know what prompted them in this attack on that girl?"

"No; they never told me nothin' about their business."

The man was being narrowly watched by the detectives during the foregoing cross-examination.

Both were keen readers of human nature.

It was easy for them to see that the coachman was merely an innocent victim of his employer.

To make sure they made no error, the Bradys questioned him at some length further, and finally left him.

Once out of earshot, the old detective said to Harry:

"We can't glean anything from him."

"No; he had nothing much to do with the affair."

"Those two rogues evidently took great care to keep their private business from the man. He was merely their tool."

"Perhaps Sullivan will be more communicative."

"We'll see. He's in the next tier of cells."

They went upstairs, and reached Sullivan's quarters.

The man was looking out between the bars of his door, and observing the two detectives, he smiled, and said pleasantly:

"Ah, I've been expecting you, gentlemen."

"You have?" demanded Harry, incredulously.

"I have, indeed."

"What gave you the impression?"

"Oh, I knew you'd come around to pump me."

"Which shows you are an old jail bird, accustomed to police methods?"

"No, not that. But the inference was natural enough."

"Granting you are right, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Absolutely nothing."

"You refuse to tell us why Isaacs persecuted Violet Gray?"

"Sure, and I won't give anything away."

"Why not?" demanded Young King Brady, quietly.

"Simply because I don't want to be after criminatin' myself."

"Quite foxy, ain't you, Sullivan?"

"I'm no fool. We may as well have a good, plain understanding right in the beginning," smilingly said the bland rascal. "It will save much time and trouble. You do be coming here to get me to confess why Isaacs persecutes Violet Gray. I am determined to give you no information. All the questioning in the world won't make me change my mind. Therefore you can't learn anything. That's plain enough, ain't it?"

"Yes, quite plain."

"Then you may as well go right away, gentlemen."

"Oh, we are in no hurry," replied Harry.

"You can't gain anything by remaining."

"We'll see about that," said the young detective.

Harry's calm, quiet answers made Sullivan get nervous.

A fear of something unpleasant began to take possession of him, and he glanced at the boy steadily a moment. The cool, airy smile left his face, and a look of alarm stole into his eyes.

He wiped his eyeglasses, tugged at his light mustache, and finally muttered:

"Faith, it's of no use to keep on quizzing. I ain't saying a word, I tell you."

"No?" asked Harry, mockingly. "Well, you are quite wise. If you did you might damage your case. It's a bad plan for a prisoner to say too much before his trial. He might condemn himself. It would be extremely bad in your case now, I'm sure. More especially as the girl is dead, and you are charged with killing her."

"What?" yelled Sullivan.

He gave a violent start, turned pale, and his eyes bulged. Young King Brady laughed quietly at his startled look.

"It's all right," said the boy. "We've got you safe, and as long as Isaacs committed suicide, we can't prove him guilty, so you'll have to bear the blame for the whole job."

"Did Isaacs kill himself?" gasped the prisoner, with a look of wild astonishment upon his face.

Harry nodded and looked grave for a moment, then he answered:

"Blew his brains out sooner than submit to capture. That silences him forever. He can't take your part now with any evidence he might give, and you can't prove your innocence."

"I can!" exclaimed Sullivan, in agitated tones. "I didn't kill the girl, or bedad I didn't attempt to kill her."

"How are you going to prove it?"

"Ain't me word good for anything?"

"No. It ain't worth a cent. We have such strong circumstantial evidence against you that you're bound to pay the penalty of that crime. At first we were inclined to help you, as we thought you were dragged into this thing by another party. But since you became so set in your resolve to say nothing to convict Isaacs, of course nothing remains to be done but to convict you."

"Hold on there!" cried Sullivan, excitedly. "Sure, an' I've made a great mistake. I won't suffer for another man's crime, an' bedad I'll tell you all about it, if you'll listen to me a moment."

CHAPTER XIII.

WORKING THE WALDORF.

At Sullivan's excited remark the Bradys exchanged meaning glances.

They realized that the bluff Harry gave was weakening him, and as Old King Brady glanced at his young partner he thought:

"He's a wonderful actor. The way he is upsetting Sullivan is simply marvelous. To look at his calm face no one would suspect he was telling a most audacious lie to entrap that fellow."

Young King Brady made an impatient gesture to Barney Sullivan. "You are too late," he exclaimed, coldly.

"Won't you listen to me?" pleaded the man.

"No. I've lost all interest in you."

"But, be heavens, I'm innocent!"

"We are going to prove you guilty, with the District Attorney's aid."

"You won't do anything of the kind. I didn't kill Violet Gray."

Harry turned to his partner.

"Come on, Old King Brady," he said. "Let's get out of here."

Sullivan was getting frantic by this time.

He grabbed the bars of his cell door, shook them, and shouted in tones of the most intense alarm:

"Say! Wait! Don't leave me, for mercy's sake."

"We haven't anything else to say," replied Harry.

"Won't you be after helping a fellow when he wants to do right?"

"Oh, what can you do?"

"Tell all I know about Isaacs."

"We don't wish to hear it. You'll spring a pack of lies on us."

"No—no. I swear——"

"Come on, Old King Brady."

"Stop!" yelled Sullivan. "I insist upon explaining matters."

The detectives strode away indifferently, and Sullivan groaned aloud.

By this time he was in a panic of fear.

That was just what Harry was aiming at.

The boy knew how to bring him to terms.

"Brady! Brady!" yelled the prisoner, desperately.

"Got him scared and anxious enough," whispered Harry.

"Yes, indeed," chuckled Old King Brady.

"For pity's sake, come back here!" shouted Sullivan.

Harry walked back to the cell door.

"What in thunder is the matter with you?" he demanded, angrily.

"I want to talk to you, so I do," panted the man, feverishly.

"Haven't I told you we didn't wish to have anything to do with you?"

"You did that, but by Jove, I can't stand it. It ain't

fair to put me on trial for a crime I didn't commit at all, at all."

"Say, weren't you Isaacs' confederate in all his attacks on the girl?"

"Yes, but I never raised a hand to hurt her."

"Isaacs did it all, I suppose."

"He did that, and I'll swear to it, too."

"Then what interest had you in helping him?"

"Sure, and he paid me to do it."

"Paid you? Simply for your aid?"

"That's all."

"Then you had no personal interest in hurting her, eh?"

"Divil a bit."

"How came you to be in league with him?"

"I'll tell you. I'm a gambler. I met him in a poker room. I was dead broke. I asked him for a loan. He told me he'd pay me a fancy price if I aided him to put Violet Gray out of his way. I was that desperate I readily consented. You know all I did for him."

"What was his object in attacking her?"

"I don't know. He never told me. All he ever said was that she was a terrible hindrance to him, and that he'd have to get rid of her, or she would ruin him altogether."

"In what way?"

"That's a mystery."

Harry was keenly disappointed.

The boy thoroughly expected to learn Isaacs' motive, but found it impossible to do so, as the man evidently kept his own counsel.

Both detectives were watching Sullivan to see if he was trying to deceive them by holding anything back.

The man could not have fooled them without their seeing it.

Evidently he was telling the truth.

Young King Brady pondered a moment, then said:

"Sullivan, we can't do anything for you."

"And why not?" gasped the prisoner.

"Because we don't know any more than we did before."

"Yes, you do. Haven't I shown you that Isaacs is the guilty party?"

"Well, you've simply said he was."

"What more do you want?"

"Proof of his guilt."

"How am I to get it?"

"By showing us a motive for his grudge against the girl."

"I've done so."

"You've merely said he claimed she was a hindrance. But you failed to state how and why she was a hindrance."

"I can't tell you what I don't know."

"Very true. But if you do know his motive you ought to tell it, and that might convince us of his guilt."

"Well, I can't tell you, as I don't know what his object was."

"In that case we can promise you nothing. Good day."

And the boy walked away.

When they reached the street Old King Brady growled:

"We are as much in the dark as ever, Harry."

"I'm discouraged," the boy replied.

"To learn Isaacs' secret we must catch him."

"It will be a difficult job, I fear."

"You've got him located."

"True enough, but we haven't got him in our power."

"Suppose we go up to the Waldorf and try to get the nippers on him."

"As he knows us by appearance, we shall have to disguise."

"That's easy enough to do, with these reversible suits we wear. Come into this doorway and alter your appearance."

They entered a tenement hall.

In five minutes they emerged looking like two different men.

Old King Brady's rusty old blue frock coat turned inside out was now a very handsome Prince Albert, with silk-faced lappels.

A brown wig and mustache altered his face, and a dark felt hat on his head gave place to the white one he had worn.

Harry converted his suit into a golfing costume, and a red wig and side whiskers made him look much older than he was.

Hiring a cab, they rode up to the great hotel.

"What is the plan of action?" queried Harry.

"We must register and mingle with the guests."

"Easily done. Who are we?"

"Gentlemen of leisure and golf enthusiasts."

"That will suit me, as I understand the technique of the game."

Reaching the hotel, they passed inside.

They secured a room on the third floor, and prowled around the corridors until dinner time without seeing Isaacs.

Several times Harry listened at his door, but failed to hear a sound which betrayed the man's presence.

Before going down to dinner the boy asked a porter:

"Have you seen Mr. Isaacs to-day?"

"Dun gone out dis mawnin', sah."

"Hasn't he come back yet?"

"No, sah."

"Any mail come for him?"

"Yassah; two letters in de office."

"Thanks," said Harry, and the porter went away.

The detectives went down to the dining room.

It was an excellent place to watch the guests of the hostelry, and the Bradys secured a table secluded in a corner from which they could watch every one who came in without attracting attention.

To their disappointment their man did not come in, although they lingered in the room until after every one was gone.

"I hope he isn't off after Violet again," said Harry, as they lit cigars and strolled out into the foyer.

"Not likely," Old King Brady replied.

Just then the porter to whom the boy spoke walked up to them. Saluting the boy, he asked:

"Yo' want ter see Mr. Isaacs, sah?"

"I do," promptly answered Young King Brady. "Is he in?"

"Up in he's room, sah."

"Alone?"

"Come in wid anudder gemman."

"Thank you."

"Want me ter fotch up you card?"

"No. We'll go unannounced."

The darky grinned and walked away.

Nodding to his partner, Harry went up in an elevator.

When they alighted on the third floor and approached the door of the villain's room they heard a murmur of voices inside.

The Bradys listened intently.

They soon recognized one of the voices as that of Isaacs, but the other was that of a stranger.

Harry held up his finger.

"Listen!" he muttered.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MONEY WRAPPERS.

The conversation going on between Simon Isaacs and his guest was quite audible to the listening detectives.

Just as they leaned against the door they heard the villain say:

"You are satisfied with my proofs, then, are you, Peter Adams?"

"Entirely so. Entirely so," responded a harsh, rasping voice.

"Is it sufficient to end the matter?"

"Assuredly. Deededly. No question about it."

"When can I expect the money?"

"It will take some time—some time yet, I'm sure."

"Well, I'm content to wait, Mr. Adams. Is it much money?"

"A matter of half a million dollars."

"Then I get all of it, eh?"

"Every cent, except the costs."

"Through you?"

"Of course. I'm the agent of the other firm."

"I see. Is there anything more I can do?"

"Not a thing. Not a thing, sir. Yet—stay—"

"Well?"

"You haven't given me the proof of death you spoke of."

"Certainly not. But I can show it to you."

"So much the better."

"Will you go with me to the Bureau of Vital Statistics tomorrow?"

"Of course I will. To be sure I will."

"Then I'll show you the death entry. The sight of it ought to clinch the matter entirely, hadn't it?"

"Certainly. I want no better evidence, sir."

"Meet me in your office to-morrow at ten, then."

"I shall, and we can view the proof together."

"It is my wish to end this affair as soon as possible. You are in Temple Court Building; all right. I'll be there."

The detectives heard the speakers approaching the door, and they swiftly glided away and plunged into their own room.

Peering out, they saw Simon Isaacs and his caller emerge.

Peter Adams was a little, fat man, with a clean-shaven face, eyeglasses, and a high hat.

"You are here permanently, I suppose?" they heard him ask.

"Oh, yes; for some time to come," Isaacs replied.

"Very well. Good day."

"Good day, Mr. Adams."

And the man departed, while Isaacs returned to his room. For a few moments the Bradys were silent.

Then Harry asked his partner:

"Shall we go right in and arrest him?"

"No."

"What?"

"Let him be."

"But—"

"Do you want to spoil it?"

"What?"

"Our chances to find out what his game is."

"After arrest he may confess—"

"Bosh! He won't confess anything."

"Do you think this man's call has anything to do with the villain's attacks upon Violet Gray?"

"There's no telling."

"Well, they spoke so ambiguously that we could not gain much of a clew to what they really meant."

"We can find out more definitely later on. Isaacs is going to remain here as long as he thinks we don't know where he is located. Therefore it will be an easy matter to lay our hands on him the moment we want him. To arrest him under the circumstances would be the height of folly. We would then never learn anything about his motives."

"Very well. Your argument is a good one."

"To-morrow morning we can call on Adams and ask him what money this man Isaacs expects to get from him. He probably has no object in concealing the facts, and will very likely tell us all about it after some urging."

"I hope so, Old King Brady."

"I've got another plan."

"What is it?"

"You recollect that Dan Green said Mr. Isaacs just bought that team and coupe, don't you?"

"I do."

"Well, I'm going to investigate that fellow."

"Upon what ground?"

"It may show us something more of his character."

"Want me?"

"No. I'll go and see both Green and Sullivan, get some information from them, and I'll come back here and tell you the result."

"All right. I'll wait here for you."

Old King Brady nodded and went away.

He was gone several hours.

When he finally returned he found Harry in his room, and the boy saw by the look of satisfaction on his face that his mission had met with a measure of success.

When he took off his coat and hat and sat down Harry approached him and said:

"Well?"

"I've made a discovery."

"Impossible?"

"Yes."

"In relation to what?"

"The money stolen from Midley & Co."

"Thunder!" ejaculated the boy. "Jasper Woods' booty."

"Exactly. I've located part of it."

"Then the cashier is in the city spending it?"

"So it seems. Besides that, Isaacs may know something about it."

"Isaacs?" asked Harry, more astonished than ever.

"Yes. Queer, ain't it?"

"For goodness sake, speak out."

Old King Brady chuckled a moment, then said:

"Don't get impatient. I called on the prisoners, as I told you I would, and learned where Isaacs bought his horses and carriage, in East Twenty-fourth street. I called on the horse dealer, brought up the subject, and he told me the rig cost Isaacs \$2,000, for which he paid in two packages of one-hundred-dollar bills. Each package had a paper wrapper around it. The horse dealer thought it came that way from the bank. Upon examining the wrappers afterward, however, he found this printed inside with a rubber stamp."

Old King Brady handed the boy a narrow strip of paper.

Upon one side was marked with blue pencil "\$1,000," and on the other side was printed in purple ink, "Midley & Co."

A startled cry escaped Harry.

He glanced at his partner in silence a moment.

Finally he exclaimed, drawing a deep breath:

"Well! Well!"

Old King Brady laughed heartily.

"What do you think of that?" he asked.

Harry pondered a moment, and answered:

"How in thunder did Isaacs get possession of \$2,000 of the money stolen from the dry goods house?"

"That's what puzzles me."

"According to the description of that stolen money given me by the head of the concern, this must be some of the money."

"I recognized that fact at once, Harry."

"What a fortunate thing that you went there."

"But I can't imagine yet what it is going to lead to."

"I suspect it may lead to the discovery of Jasper Woods. This man Isaacs may be a confederate of his."

"Perhaps. At any rate, we will soon find out."

Both were puzzled.

They could not form any idea, with a degree of accuracy, as to how Isaacs got possession of the stolen money.

After discussing the matter at some length further they finally retired for the night.

Next morning, after breakfast, they proceeded downtown and entered the Temple Court Building.

It was there that Adams had his office.

The directory told them it was on the second floor, and when they ascended in one of the elevators and reached the door of his office the lettering told them he was a lawyer.

This they suspected before, as most of the tenants of that building were followers of the legal profession.

Pushing open the door, they entered.

Almost the first person they saw sitting at a desk before them, behind the railing, was the stout little man whom they had seen in conversation with Isaacs.

He rose with an inquiring look to find out what they wanted.

CHAPTER XV.

SOLVING THE MYSTERY.

"Peter Adams?"

"At your service, sir."

"I am Old King Brady."

"What! The famous detective?"

"This young gentleman is my partner—Harry Brady."

"Glad to meet you, sir. Come in, sir. Sit down, sir."

And wondering what the noted detectives wanted of him, the fat little lawyer drew two chairs over to his desk, sat down, and beaming on the Bradys over the tops of his spectacles, he asked:

"And how can I serve you, gentlemen?"

Old King Brady took a bite from a piece of plug tobacco, glanced sidewise at Mr. Adams, and said in a mysterious manner:

"You are mixed up in a very peculiar case."

"Indeed?" gasped the lawyer, nervously. "Indeed?"

"In fact, a criminal case."

"But, my dear Mr. Brady, only in a professional way—"

"Of course."

"Oh!" said the lawyer, with a sigh of relief.

"Now see here, Mr. Adams," the detective went on, earnestly. "I know very well it's a breach of professional etiquette for a lawyer to discuss the business of his clients with outsiders, but in this instance the rights of justice demand it."

"To what case do you refer, sir?"

"That of Simon Isaacs."

"Simon Isaacs? Simon Isaacs?" said the lawyer, with a puzzled and wondering look. "Really, Mr. Brady, I don't know who you mean. I've never met an individual of that name. You must certainly be mistaken."

"Not at all, Mr. Adams."

"But I tell you I don't know Simon Isaacs."

Old King Brady glanced suspiciously at the old lawyer. He began to fear that Adams was attempting to shield his client. Finally he exclaimed, impatiently:

"Humbug!"

"No humbug about it."

"Do you deny what we absolutely know to be the truth?"

"You must be laboring under a mistake, Mr. Brady."

"Oh, no. There's no error. We saw you with him yesterday."

The lawyer was speechless with astonishment.

He peered at Old King Brady earnestly a moment, then he violently rubbed the top of his bald head with a big silk handkerchief, rattled his heel on the floor and finally coughed, and said:

"Saw me with him? Saw me with this Isaacs only yesterday?"

"To be exact, it was about seven o'clock last night."

"Whereabouts?"

"In room No. 303, in the Waldorf."

Mr. Adams fairly jumped from his chair.

Bending over nearer to Old King Brady, he gasped:

"You are mistaken in the identity of the man."

"I guess not," replied the detective, quietly. "If you will glance at the hotel register you will find his name signed there as Simon Isaacs, and any of the help will point out the man you called on."

"But, by thunder, if that's the case, I've been duped."

"How is that, sir?"

"Simply because he represented himself to me as Jasper Woods."

The Bradys were intensely startled, and Harry cried:

"Simon Isaacs and Jasper Woods the same man? It's ridiculous. Impossible. There's some deception here."

Old King Brady kept cool.

He reflected a moment, and finally said:

"Jasper Woods was an old man with long, gray hair and a long, gray beard. He was old-fashioned in style, and a slow, methodical old fogey in every way. Simon Isaacs, on the contrary, has black hair, a black mustache, dresses in the height of fashion, lives in a stylish hotel, and acts and looks like a person of twenty-five or thirty."

"You've got me puzzled," said the lawyer.

"The best way to come to a clear understanding of the case," said Old King Brady, "will be for you to explain what your business is with Simon Isaacs, or Jasper Woods, as you call him."

"I can readily do that," answered the old lawyer. "Some time ago Andrew Gray died in Liverpool, leaving a fortune of half a million dollars behind, and no will to designate to whom the money was to go."

"Andrew Gray, eh?"

"Precisely. My Liverpool agents make a specialty of such cases and took up the claims of distant relatives. It was then found out that Andrew Gray had a son named Philip, who came to America many years ago and married a girl named Martha Chambers. All trace of Philip and his family was lost. Search was made for them and it was

found that Philip died, leaving, beside his widow, a daughter named Violet."

"Violet Gray, eh?"

"Exactly," replied the lawyer. "I could not find either of them, although I made every effort to do so. Violet Gray was the heiress of this big fortune, on account of the death of her father."

"Naturally."

"Well, as the rightful heirs could not be found, we next began to hunt for Andrew Gray's stepson, Jasper Woods, and the gentleman in question answered our advertisement. He was here in New York and had been here over twenty-five years. He called on me with undeniable proof of his identity and swore that he knew Violet Gray, and declared that she had died. In fact, he offered to procure the legal evidence that she was dead, and that her mother and father were dead. Consequently Jasper Woods proved himself to be the next in line to claim the fortune of Andrew Gray."

"He gave you evidence, did he?"

"Oh, yes. The best. The best, sir."

"I see. Go on, Mr. Adams."

"Well, sir, we proceeded to push the claim of Jasper Woods, and all his evidence is now on the way to England. I expect in a very short time to hear that Jasper Woods will receive the fortune."

"And you know this man Isaacs as Jasper Woods, do you?"

"Decidedly, if you mean the man I met at the Waldorf."

"That's the man I mean, sir."

"He is the person who proved himself to be Jasper Woods."

"I see. Now, when you called for him at the hotel—what name did you ask for when you went in?"

"No name. I met him at my office here on every occasion and last evening he brought me to his room at the hotel."

"Yes. Now see here."

"Well."

"Violet Gray and her mother are alive."

"They are?" gasped the lawyer.

"Yes, and we will show them to you."

"Great Scott!"

"They have got evidence of Philip Gray's identity."

"Then the fortune is theirs and Jasper Woods gets nothing."

"Just so."

"Will you prove this to me?"

"Certainly, we shall. Moreover, your explanation has cleared up a profound mystery which for a long time has been puzzling us greatly."

"And what is that, Mr. Brady?"

"An assassin has for some time been trying to murder Violet Gray and we've been spending our time baffling him. We could not fathom his object in trying to kill the pretty shop girl. But now we know it. The villain was the man you call Jasper Woods. His object in trying to murder that girl was to put her out of the way so you would never find her, and thus to prevent her wresting the fortune from him which he was scheming to get."

"Good Lord!" gasped the horrified lawyer, raising both hands.

"Shall we prove it to you?"

"By all means."

"And when we do?"

"I'll throw Jasper Woods' claims in the waste basket, and I'll take up the legal claim of Violet Gray, and see that she gets possession of her rights!" said the old lawyer.

"Then put on your hat, and come with us."

Mr. Adams rushed to the wardrobe and the Bradys gazed at each other smilingly, and Harry exclaimed:

"At last, the mystery is solved."

"Only partly," replied Old King Brady.

"How do you mean?"

"We must now find out who this man Isaacs is, and how he happens to be personating Jasper Woods."

"That may come about when we arrest him."

"Perhaps. It's hard to say. But I'd like to do the trick before we land him behind the bars."

Just then Mr. Adams joined them.

He had on his high hat and he said:

"Come on, gentlemen, I am ready for you."

And they left the office together.

CHAPTER XVI.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS.

A cab in which the Bradys and the lawyer rode uptown paused before the Waldorf and they all passed into the office.

"Can I have room 303, on the third floor?" Harry asked the clerk.

"Sorry, but it's engaged," replied the hotel man.

"By whom?"

"Simon Isaacs."

"Thank you. Good-day."

And the trio returned to the cab and drove away.

"Are you satisfied now that the occupant of room 303 is a man named Isaacs, who told you he was Jasper Woods?" asked Young King Brady, as the vehicle went across the city.

"As I observed that Woods occupied room 303," said the lawyer, "I'm convinced that he's living there under an assumed name, or else he uses his right name and isn't the real Jasper Woods."

"Now for Mrs. Gray's flat," said Old King Brady. The cab soon reached it.

Violet's mother admitted them to the parlor.

"Good-morning, Mrs. Gray," said Old King Brady.

"Ah, Mr. Brady," she replied smilingly. "Good-morning."

"Mrs. Gray, what was your maiden name, if you please?"

"That's a queer question. But I'll tell you. It was Martha Chambers."

"Do you hear that, Mr. Adams?"

"Yes, indeed," replied the lawyer.

"Mrs. Gray, what were your husband's and father-in-law's names?"

"Philip. His father's name was Andrew."

"And where did Philip Gray come from?"

"Liverpool."

"Do you hear that, Mr. Adams?"

"I'm convinced of the identity of this lady," said the lawyer.

"Where is your daughter, Violet, Mrs. Gray?"

"At work in the store of Midley & Co."

"As I supposed. I presume this questioning puzzles you?"

"It does, Mr. Brady."

"Then we'll explain. This gentleman is Lawyer Peter Adams."

They bowed to each other politely.

Old King Brady resumed:

"Your husband's parents died and left half a million. As your husband is dead, Violet inherits it. Do you understand?"

"Good gracious!" gasped the startled widow.

"But," Old King Brady hastened to say, "your husband's step-brother, Jasper Woods, turned up, and after trying to prove you and your daughter were dead, he put in a claim for the fortune."

"This is amazing!" exclaimed the lady.

"Of course it is. Moreover, it's this Jasper Woods who has been trying to kill your child so she couldn't claim the inheritance."

"Ah! That explains the mystery."

"Yes, indeed. Now, to establish your husband's identity please bring us the papers Philip Gray left you when he died, and they will be the means of procuring that fortune for your daughter."

Mrs. Gray got the papers.

She handed them to the lawyer and he examined them.

When he finished he looked up smilingly and said:

"Madam, these documents establish beyond the shadow of a doubt that your husband was the son of Andrew Gray, of Liverpool, who died and left Philip Gray his fortune. In view of the fact that your husband is dead, the money reverts to your daughter, Violet."

"I am delighted to hear the good news."

"You have occasion to, as it is a large fortune," replied the lawyer. "And this evidence of your daughter's claim is quite enough to prevent Jasper Woods from getting a cent of the money. By your leave I'll keep these papers."

"Certainly."

"By means of them I'll prove your claim."

"I trust you may, Mr. Adams. My husband, when alive, often told me of the wealth of his parents, and he also affirmed that he expected some day to inherit their fortune."

"The time has come, only he now gets no benefit."

"Well, his child will."

The lawyer got some important information from her, and then, with the Bradys, drove away in the cab.

While on their way to the Grand street store, Mr. Adams said:

"I'll cable to my agents in Liverpool, to-day, and stop them from prosecuting the claim for Jasper Woods. And I'll tell them I've found Violet Gray and order them to put in her claim, and they will later substantiate it with the evidence I'll send over to them."

"Good enough!" said Young King Brady.

"Where are we going now, may I venture to ask?"

"To the shop where Violet works, so we can prove her identity."

"An excellent suggestion. A good suggestion, sir."

When the cab reached the big department store they went in and proceeded straight to Mr. Midley's private office. He was in, and glad to see the detectives.

As he shook hands, he asked eagerly:

"Well, what news?"

"None yet," replied Harry.

"You haven't found Jasper Woods yet, or the \$50,000 he stole from us?" asked Mr. Midley, in disappointed tones.

"No, he has dropped completely out of sight, sir. But —"

"But what?"

"We learned where \$2,000 of your money went."

"Where?"

"To buy a carriage and team for a man named Simon Isaacs."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. Simon Isaacs, though, strange to say, also goes under the name of Jasper Woods," said Harry.

"Is he our thieving cashier?"

"We suspect he may be."

"Don't you know?"

"Not positively yet."

"Why?"

"Because your Jasper Woods was a gray-headed old man —"

"And Simon Isaacs?"

"Is young, dark haired, and has a black mustache."

"He can't be Woods, then."

"We ain't so sure."

"I'll tell you how you can distinguish if he is."

"How?"

"By a red wreath with the initials 'J. W.' in blue in the centre, tattooed upon his right forearm," said Mr. Midley.

"By Jove, that's a good clew."

"Can't you tell by his voice or face —"

"No, as we never saw or heard your man, Woods."

"Very true. I forgot that."

"Of course," said Harry, "Woods may have had his hair cut and dyed, and he might have shaved off his gray beard, and dyed his mustache black. That would make a wonderful change in his face. Then, being provided with the stolen \$50,000, he could easily procure stylish clothing, live at the Waldorf, and buy horses and carriages."

"It's worth investigating."

"And we'll act on your suggestion, sir. But we've come

to see Violet Gray. We want to establish her identity to this lawyer, who holds a fortune of half a million for her. Will you kindly point her out and introduce her to Mr. Adams?"

"Certainly I shall," said the amazed shop-keeper.

He led the little lawyer out into the store and introduced him to Violet.

As the pretty shop girl's identity was established by such a responsible man as Mr. Midley, the lawyer could have no doubts about her at all.

That's what the astute detectives designed.

When the girl was told why she was identified she was amazed.

She next learned why her enemy had so persistently tried to kill her, and her surprise knew no bounds.

The old lawyer talked to her for some time, and finally, having satisfied himself of her identity, he went away with the Bradys.

Once more in the carriage, the old detective asked him:

"Are you satisfied of the girl's identity now?"

"Perfectly—perfectly!" replied the lawyer.

"And you will take up the case in her interest?"

"Yes, indeed, and I'll have that rascal Woods put in jail for trying to put that beautiful girl out of the way so he could swindle her."

"No, no!" interposed Harry, "you must do nothing of the sort."

"And why not?"

"Because you would spoil our chance to arrest the man."

"Then what do you want me to do?"

"Go right ahead with Violet's claim —"

"I intend to."

"Say nothing at all to Woods about what happened, and lead him to imagine you are working away for him."

"He is to see me to-day."

"Yes, we know about it."

"Then I'll go on with the matter as if nothing happened."

"Exactly so. We want to investigate him a little more, and then we shall pounce on him and put him in jail."

"Very well. I'll be guided by you, Mr. Brady."

They left him at Temple Court, and went away in the cab to the Central Office.

The detectives here disguised themselves as a couple of bewhiskered policemen, and long before ten o'clock, they were in the office of the bureau of vital statistics, looking for Adams and Isaacs.

Finally the lawyer entered with his villainous client, and the Bradys saw them go to one of the desks and consult a clerk.

The detectives saw that there was a tacit understanding between him and Isaacs, and he showed them one of the books.

Here an entry was found recording the death of Violet Gray.

It was a rank forgery, and the lawyer knew it.

But he pretended to be satisfied.

He was convinced, however, that the rogue beside him

had bribed one of the office clerks to make the false entry to deceive him.

Nor was his surmise wrong.

That was exactly what Isaacs had done.

The Bradys had a special object in being there, and they now managed to get quite close to the lawyer and his client, without attracting their attention. From this point of vantage, they took a long and careful survey of Isaacs' hair and mustache.

The Bradys were cognizant of the fact that, in nine cases out of ten, where a person dyes the hair and whiskers, the dye does not discolor the hair close to the roots.

Acting on this theory, they examined Isaacs' hair and mustache.

The result exceeded their most sanguine expectations, for they now plainly saw that the hair on his head and lips was gray close to where it joined his skin.

Moreover, their keen scrutiny showed them that the black color was produced by a good dye.

When the lawyer and the villain left the office, Harry exclaimed:

"Old King Brady, I'll bet anything that Simon Isaacs is none other than Jasper Woods cleverly disguised!"

"And I agree with you entirely," assented the old detective.

CHAPTER XVII.

ARRESTING THE FENCE.

"Old King Brady," said Harry that night, as they emerged from a restaurant on Sixth avenue, "as we haven't much doubt now about the identity of Simon Isaacs, I think the time is about ripe to clap him in jail."

"He's pretty sure to be in now," said the old detective, as he glanced at his watch, "so we had better go right up to the hotel. We'll be sure to find him in his room."

"And here's a car. Come ahead!"

They boarded it and rode uptown.

When they reached the hotel it was nine o'clock.

Approaching the clerk, Harry asked him:

"Is Simon Isaacs in his room?"

"No. He just went out."

"That's too bad!" said the boy, in disappointed tones.

"I'm surprised that you didn't meet him, sir."

"You don't know where he went, of course?"

"No, but I heard him tell a boy to get him a cab."

"I'll see if I can find him."

And so saying Young King Brady hastily left the office.

Addressing the man in the street who attended to the carriages, the boy asked for some information about Isaacs.

Pointing at a cab just turning around into Fifth avenue, the man said in hesitating tones:

"The man you want is in that carriage."

Harry thanked him, and hurried away, followed by his partner.

When they reached the corner they saw the carriage in

question going slowly down the avenue, and they ran after it.

They followed it this way as far as Twenty-sixth street, when, to their surprise, they saw it pause, and observed Isaacs alight, pay the driver, and walk rapidly away.

"That's an odd thing for him to do," muttered the boy.

"Wants to cover his tracks, perhaps," answered Old King Brady.

"He's going east—toward Third avenue."

"Shadow him carefully."

They easily kept the man in view.

He led them a chase to Third avenue, and boarded a car going downtown.

The detectives were forced to pick up a cab to follow him, as he thus threatened to distance them altogether.

When the car reached Stanton street, Isaacs alighted.

He then headed straight for Aaron Levy's fence on Essex street, and they stole up the alley after him, and got in the hall.

There they hid and listened at the door.

Isaacs had gone into the office, and they heard him cry:

"Back again, old fellow, and I want a change of clothes."

"Vot kind?" demanded the old Jew.

"Tough—decidedly tough, Aaron."

"I vos got ust vot yer vant. Vait a minute."

There came a silence of a few moments.

Presently they heard Levy ask:

"How does dot suid yer?"

"Fine. I'll put the rags on. Got a mask?"

"Sure I haf."

"Give it to me."

"Ach, yer vos go und grack a grib?"

"I'm on an errand similar to that. How do I look?"

"Oud ohf sighd!" said the Jew. "Py shimineys, when I cut off your gray hair und whitskers, und dye your hair und mustache plack, I toughd I shanged your looks vondherful; but mit dot rig on, your own fader vouldn't know yer, so help me gracious!"

Isaacs laughed, pleased at the compliment.

"I guess I'll pass unrecognized," he muttered. "Now, I want you to stop referring to the time I was known as Jasper Woods. Some one might hear you. As I got away with \$50,000, I'm liable to land in jail if any one gives me away to the coppers. Do you understand?"

"Nopody vill hear me in mein blace."

"I hope not."

Harry nudged Old King Brady, and whispered:

"So he's Jasper Woods, after all, according to his own admission!"

"Just so," assented the old detective. "But we suspected it. Now we know as a positive fact why he had \$2,000 of Midley & Co.'s money to spend on his horses and carriage—"

"Hark!"

The Jew now asked Isaacs:

"Vhere yer vos goin'?"

"That's my business!" replied Isaacs, crossly.

"Comin' pack here?"

"I may have to—in a big hurry, too!"

"Dot vos goot! I vant some more money from you."

"You're an old fiend for money. You're always bleeding me."

"Ach, don'd kick. I helbed yer, und I vant my bay."

"Oh, I'll give what I promised you, I've got \$40,000 of Midley's money in the bank yet, so ye needn't fear about getting yours."

"I knew yer wouldn't fail ter be honest mit yer oldt friendt," replied the Jew, with a chuckle. "Say, yer look fine!"

"Then I'll go."

Foreseeing what a valuable witness Levy would be against Isaacs when they arrested him, Old King Brady whispered:

"I'm going to pull in the Jew, Harry."

"Wait until after Isaacs is gone."

"I intend to. You must follow him."

"I'll find out where he's going, and why he is disguising himself before I come back," replied the boy.

"Look out! Isaacs is coming 'out now."

They glided out, and hid in the court yard behind some rubbish.

Hardly was this done when Isaacs emerged.

Clad in a rough suit and cap, he went into the street, and Harry glided along in close pursuit of him.

Old King Brady waited ten minutes.

As there was no sign of their return, he boldly entered the shanty and pushed open the door leading into Levy's office.

There was a dim light burning in the place.

Levy stood behind the counter looking at the detective.

He gave a wild start of alarm when he recognized his caller.

"Holy Moses!" he groaned, "it's Prady!"

The old detective nodded and aimed a revolver at the fence's head.

"Up with your hands!" he exclaimed.

"Mein gootness cracious!" began the Jew, in alarm.

"Quick!" roared Old King Brady, threateningly.

"Yah! yah!" bellowed Levy, and up went his spread fingers.

Old King Brady critically surveyed him a moment.

Assured that he had the old villain at his mercy, he exclaimed:

"Come from behind that counter."

Levy obeyed, but kept a wary eye on the revolver.

"Meestair Prady, shendleman," he whined, "I don't t'ink yer would shoot a poor oldt feller vot neffer hurted yer in all his life!"

"Shut up, you old brute!"

"Vos I pinched?"

"Of course you are."

"Vot för?"

"I'll tell you later. Want the bracelets on?"

"No, no! Anyting but dot!"

"Then come along quietly. We want to see you down at headquarters, to find out what you know about Jasper Woods' affair."

Levy gave a gasp and turned white.

"I don't know der man——" he began very earnestly.

"You lie! He just left here. Harry is after him, too. You'll soon meet him in jail, Levy. You understand that, don't you? He is Woods, ain't he?"

"Well, yes," admitted the fence reluctantly.

"We want to know what became of him when he robbed his employers."

"He came here, of course."

"Then you had him hid?"

"Sure I did. He baid me ter dit it."

"No wonder we couldn't find him. Did you disguise him?"

"Yes. I cut off his whiskers und grief him stylish glodings. Den he vent by der hodel ter lif, so he could work his shnaps alretty."

"We know that much. Are you ready to go?"

"Let me lock me mein blace up first."

"I have no objections to that, as you'll be gone from here a long time, and some of your friends might rob you in the meantime."

"Vos yer lock me ub?"

"Of course."

Levy burst out crying.

He begged to be released, and offered a bribe. But Old King Brady was very obdurate, and when he locked the house, the detective led him away very much overwhelmed with fear.

The fence was locked up.

When this was done, Old King Brady muttered:

"Only one more to come, and we will have the whole crooked bunch where they will do no harm."

Wondering how his boy partner was faring, Old King Brady finally went home to await Harry's return.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

Young King Brady tracked Simon Isaacs from the Essex street fence across town to the flat occupied by Violet and her mother.

The villain rang the bell, and when Mrs. Gray opened the door, he suddenly seized her by the throat and pushed her back into the parlor.

Kicking the door shut, he aimed a pistol at the old lady's head and hissed:

"If you make any noise, I'll shoot you!"

The poor woman was half strangled by his deadly grip on her throat, and the sight of the revolver greatly terrified her.

"Let me go," she moaned, "you are killing me."

"I'm here to get those private papers of your husband's," hoarsely muttered Isaacs, "and by the arch fiend, I'll have your life if you do not instantly give them up to me."

"I haven't got them," faintly protested the poor woman.

"You lie! You know you do!" panted the rascal furiously. "I'm a desperate man, Mrs. Gray, and I'll brook no trifling—do you hear?"

"I tell you I gave them to—"

"Silence!" he interrupted, fiercely. "I'll listen to no lies from you!"

"But—"

"Hark! I'm going to count three. If by the time you hear me speak the last number you do not give up those papers, or tell me where they are, I'll kill you as sure as fate!"

Mrs. Gray made no reply.

Her brain was swimming, and her senses were departing. "One!" exclaimed the villain.

Just then he heard Violet moving about in the rear apartments, and he feared at any moment she might enter and disturb him.

As Mrs. Gray made no reply, he continued:

"Two!"

At that moment Harry was peering through the front window under the half-drawn shade, and saw what was going on.

The next moment the boy was in the hall.

Just as the word "Three!" was on the tip of Isaacs' tongue, the boy pushed open the door and dashed in.

Startled, Isaacs glared around and saw him.

With a muttered curse he let Mrs. Gray fall to the floor, and raised his pistol, but Harry acted the quickest.

Bang! went the boy's pistol.

With a yell of pain Isaacs fell wounded.

The pistol dropped from his nerveless hand, and Harry secured it.

Alarmed by the shot, Violet rushed into the room, and with a cry of alarm she flung herself upon her mother, crying frantically:

"Oh, she's dead! She's dead!"

"Don't alarm yourself. She has only fainted!" said Harry.

The next moment the boy pounced on Isaacs and handcuffed him.

The man was furious, and yelled:

"I'll kill you for this, Brady!"

"Your threats are useless, Jasper Woods!" retorted the boy.

"Heavens!" gasped the man, turning pale. "He knows—"

"Oh, we know all about you and your game to rob this poor girl of her grandfather's money, and to murder her so she could not baffle you! And, moreover, we know how you robbed Midley & Co., changed your looks and assumed the name of Isaacs. Jasper Woods, your race is run, and you'll pay the penalty of your misdeeds now!"

The villain made no reply.

A horrible feeling took possession of him, though.

He realized that he was foiled and beaten at his desperate game.

Mrs. Gray recovered presently, and when she saw the man captured, her relief knew no bounds, and she said:

"How he knew about my husband's papers I can't imagine."

"It's simple enough to understand," replied Harry. "When he was calling here in the past as Jasper Woods, you told him you had them. He came to-night to get them to destroy all evidence that would help you to prove your identity in case you tried to claim that fortune."

"I am so glad he is captured!" fervently said Violet. "Now I have nothing further to fear from the scoundrel!"

Soon after Harry took his prisoner away and locked him up.

When the detectives afterward appeared against the gang in court, it was found from Levy's confession how Woods had changed his identity.

Green, Sullivan and Levy were sent to prison for their part in the plot. For the robbery of Midley & Co., and his subsequent villainies, Jasper Woods was sentenced to ten years in Sing Sing.

He had \$40,000 of Midley & Co.'s money left, deposited in a bank, and the Bradys recovered it and returned it to its owners, thereby winning their unbounded gratitude.

Peter Adams proved Violet Gray to be the legal heiress of Andrew Gray, and in due time the pretty shop girl came into possession of her fortune, and resigned her position in the big drygoods store.

It is safe to say that she afterward married Ralph Morgan, the stock broker to whom she was engaged, and she and her good mother ever after enjoyed the blessings of their wealth.

They never forgot the Bradys, to whose untiring skill they owed all they got, and the noted detectives were welcome callers at their house.

But now that the detectives had finished that mystifying case so successfully, they took up with other detective work for the Secret Service. Our next number will contain a story of the most thrilling exploits of their career.

[THE END.]

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